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FAMILY SECRETS,

LITERARY AND DOMESTICK.

IN

FIVE VOLUMES.

LETTER BY AND DOMESTIC

BY MR PRATT

FAMILY RECORD
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Once more I speak
To urge the justice, whole society
Attends the bloody acts of oppression
With equal penance

PRINTED FOR A. M. DODD & CO. 1848

FAMILY SECRETS,

LITERARY AND DOMESTICK.

By MR. PRATT.

IN

FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. V.

Once more I ascend,
To urge the Justice, whose almighty word
Measures the bloody acts of impious men,
With equal penance.

CHAPMAN.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. N. LONGMAN, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1797.

FAMILY RECORDS

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WILLIAM and DOMINIC

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TO

JOHN FONBLANQUE, Esq.

COMMON place satire, and panegyrick, should be enumerated amongst the VULGAR ERRORS, which, more or less, disfigure the good-sense and candour of every country. A number of these, more especially of the former, attach to our own: and of all common place censure, that which is thrown, in the lump, upon professional men, is the most illiberal and pernicious. The very names of Priest and Lawyer—the one ordained to inculcate divine and eternal laws—the other appointed to administer a code of human justice founded upon those—can scarcely be mentioned without affixing thereto unmanly epithets. These are extended even to modes of faith; concerning which men are divided in opinion: and as christian dog, hypocritical catholick, heretick protestant, are retorted on the one hand; knavish Israelite, sensual

mahomedan, are recriminated on the other. The generous will look on it all as the dark shadow of prejudice; the illustrious will dispel it as a vapour dissolved by the sun. Yet popular ideas are a kind of moral epidemics; they may be classed amongst the catching disorders of our childhood. The cradle is scarcely exempt. The nursery breathes the contagion; mixing with all that we see, and hear, and taste. We imbibe false opinions, even with our maternal nourishment: the tender parent, while supporting the life she gave, infuses them with her kifs. The infant lisps in prejudice; and voice no sooner forms itself into language, than it begins to express that prejudice. In the parlour it gains strength; and descending into the kitchen, grows into a size so enormous, that neither the discipline of schools, nor the precepts of the written page, can wholly root it out. It is thus that the infant mind goes distempered into the world, and collecting force as it goes, from the power of habit and of example, the spreading malady has infected the world itself. Hence prejudices are to be

ranked

ranked in the number of our FIRST IMPRESSIONS; and like most of those, are indelible: for if intellect matured, and sentiment liberalized, efface some, others will remain. The parrot, the pie, and other imitative birds, may be easily brought to run the routine of vulgar abuse,—and, with as little difficulty they may learn a chime of virtuous epithets, but who shall teach them to forget either the one or the other? The bad, and the good, mix in their senseless vocabulary, yet form idioms and language nearly as wise and generous, as those which are adopted by the chattering echoes of society, who call knave and fool on a like *parroted* principle.

In sincere hope, that something may be added to the arguments against the unfair practice of involving large bodies of respectable men in the crimes of individual members, the author has endeavoured to paint the virtues of men of different persuasions and pursuits, giving to each the force of a living instance.

Of the three brothers, whose characters are amongst the most prominent objects of this

work, one, has been discriminated by integrity, firmness, and philosophick energy of mind; accompanied with tenderness of heart. Another, by the aid of sterling talents and all-subduing perseverance, distinguished himself for sound principles, a sound understanding, and as a sound lawyer.

As a member of that dignified profession, which defines and maintains the rights of social beings, and as a man—his private friends and the publick are fully competent to decide, how far the Gentleman, whose name appears at the head of this volume, is properly chosen to illustrate the above-mentioned traits in the characters of John and James Fitzorton.

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FAMILY SECRETS.

CHAPTER I.

THE instant he departed, Patty laboured to convince Sir Guise, that her father had been blaming himself without cause, though the Baronet had most likely something within, that overturned all her pious arguments on that subject; she then told him, "that as their lodger would not be at home till late in the day, her mother thought it might be more agreeable to sit in the room above stairs, which," said Patty, "is more pleasant, as it looks into the street, and if Sir Guise pleased, she would shew him the way," adding, "that even if their lodger should happen to arrive, he was so good a gentleman, she was sure he would not be displeased."

Sir Guise having few resources within himself to which he could apply with any hope

of consolation, accepted the proposal, and followed his amiable guide into a spacious dining apartment which opened into a drawing room, and that again into a more extensive bedroom, than the front of the house seemed to promise; "nor is this the best part either, sir," said she, "for beyond this chamber there is another apartment as large again as this, but our gentleman—'tis all his own furniture you must know—has filled it so with goods of one sort or another, that it is never used, and I often say to myself, what a pity it is such beautiful, grand things as are in that room, should be put out of sight:—It is generally locked, but I see the key is now in the door."

Sir Guise, feeling his curiosity excited by this eulogium, expressed a desire to look at what had been so favourably described.

Patty ran hastily to open the door, and begged he would walk in. The Baronet entered; but in the next moment, abruptly receded with every mark of horror, as at the sight of some dreadful apparition. Of dreadful apparitions, indeed, we have been told

told with all the awful pageantry of circumstances; and those who have wished to affect our imaginations or agitate our passions, by making us wish, yet dread to approach the phantoms they have conjured up, have at last wound up our hopes and fears to the expectation of something tremendous: but without using any of these arts of heightening, never surely, has the human eye been struck with a sight, nor the human soul appalled with a sensation more terrible, than Sir Guise Stuart experienced on beholding the objects now displayed to his view.

In the apartment from which the Baronet drew back, were placed those very articles, which, we have already observed, were saved from the general wreck of the abbey sale: and Sir Guise saw a spacious room crowded with objects, which, though inanimate, might rive the hardest heart. Here was the bridal-bed, which admitted him as an unworthy partner, when the good and beautiful Matilda became his wedded victim. Here also was deposited the family-piece that contained the portraits of her

parents, wreathing around her virgin form garlands of flowers; ah! little suspecting then, they were ever to be displaced by thorny fetters; the sacred couch too, where, on, after the points of those thorns festered in her heart, she breathed her last;—even the cradle which lulled awhile the cares that were in store for her unhappy children, the ill-treated Charles and Caroline. “How?—how came these here?” asked Sir Guise, in a voice that communicated the terrors it expressed to the trembling Patty.

“I know not, an please your honour,” she replied. “I was at school far away when they were brought, and I never asked or heard where they came from: but, as they belong to our lodger, my mother, I dare say, can tell.”

“Who then is your lodger?”

“Sir John Fitzorton, please your honour, is his honour’s name,”

Inasmuch as it was possible to augment the emotions of Sir Guise, they were increased by this intelligence. “John Fitzorton!” reiterated he in faltering accents,

"is he the owner of these goods, and the occupier of these apartments? and where is he? when does he come? perhaps he may be even now in his way hither:—hark! hark! child! there is a knock at the door; doubtless it is him—he must not see me go out; open the window; O if it be him! where can I go? will he stay long? is there any other way out of the house? O hide, O hide me from the eye of John Fitzorton!"

As he uttered these questions, he was running wild as it were with dread about the rooms; and it was in vain that Patty assured him, "it was only her father come back;" but this information, Sir Guise seemed not even to hear. He continued to traverse the apartments, and had got into the store-room with an idea of seeking a hiding place; but there, yet more afflicting images smote his view, and again drove him back in consternation, and he exclaimed, "Oh God! those objects are more terrible, even than John Fitzorton! I had rather brave the sight of
B 3 him,

him, his whole family, and hell itself, than be closed in that place !”

Without attending to the astonished Patty, who supposed that the madness he had exhibited the night before had returned, he precipitated himself down stairs; rushed in a disordered manner by Robert and his wife, and staring wildly at them without speaking, got into the street.

CHAPTER II.

THE surprise which behaviour of this kind produces in the spectators, takes off for a while all power of action; and Sir Guise had gained the pavement and was running along it at full speed, like a man dreading pursuit, before either the husband or wife could impart their suspicions to each other. Both however agreed, when they recovered speech, that his raving fits had returned; and when the daughter came, with an air scarcely less distraught than his own, to give in her evidence, by relating his strange demeanour in the rooms above, they were unanimous

unanimous not only in their sentiments, but in their commiseration.

“And no wonder,” cried Robert Irwin: “what that poor man has upon his mind, is enough to drive the devil himself out of his wits, and if he had seen what I did just now in Grosvenor-square, he would have been madder still. Behold ye, when I got there, his fine lady-madam, had but just got into bed, and some of the ringleaders of her gang were keeping it up over the dice-boxes, and the best wines out of poor Sir Guise’s cellar; the porter, whom I waked out of his great chair, and, who is the only man I knew, told me that the servants, men and women, were asleep, or dead drunk on chairs and sofas and carpets in the different rooms, lying among one another pig fashion.—O what a cursed thing it is to be a bad man, especially a wicked father, my Patty!”

“Poor gentleman, how I pity him!” said Patty.

“But you have got something there, for his honour,” observed the wife.

"You shall hear," resumed Irwin; "as nobody but the porter could speak, he told me, he was sorry for his master's misfortunes, but it was more than that place was worth, to disturb her ladyship so soon after she was gone to rest: and to tell you the truth," whispered he, "a little bit of a rumpus happened in course of our grand doing last night, between our Squire Vally, as we call him, and a new Spark madam has just taken a fancy to; and so Vally, who is a desperatious man, gave his rival, who is a bit of a lord too, they say, a box on the ear: whereupon, the Lord talked pretty much about swords and guns. Master Nicky Dabble, who is mostly here of late, seemed to think that lawyering him a little would be best; but some how, they huffed Nick out of the house, and as my lord,—what a plague is his name!—is a new visitor, and just come to his estate,—you understand me, Robert: there was a confabulation betwixt Vall and our madam Tempest, as we call her; and the upshot of it was, that she wheedled, and he begged pardon; and I fancy, my Lord
and

and my Lady agreed to settle the difference above stairs, and Vally and Nick are as merry as grigs below. There, you may hear them laughing away now."

"Well, I am glad they have made it up, however," observed Patty, with the utmost innocence of thought, "only I wish her poor disturbed husband had been there when the quarrel was made up, that he might have shared it too."—"That might not have been quite so well, mayhap," replied Robert, winking at Margaret.—"But to finish my story; the porter advised me to go as I came: for most folks, Robert, said he, laughing, go away empty from this house, even if they come into it loaded."—"No matter for that," said I; "then I'll see if I can't make a bit of a change in the old place: I suppose the master of the house has got a corner of it above or below where he puts his things; now as he wants some of them, and has fallen into a bit of a scrape, I shall thank you to shew me where it is." "Why how you talk, Robert!" said the porter, "this is not Sir Guise's house, nor madam Tempest's neither, no,

nor Vally's, 'tis in short, nobody's house, and every body's;—properly to speak, it belongs," added he, laughing, "to one King Faro, harder than his name-fake of old; for Tempest, and Vally, and Nick, and the Orleys, who are now at the top of the tree, and fifty others, are only his subjects, and he plays the deuce with 'em all sometimes; and as to Sir Guise, he has been at peep-bo with his and my lady's creditors some time; and, except a small bundle which was brought here late last night, by one of Nick Dabble's chaps, saying it belonged to Sir Guise, who had given his chum the slip, I don't think he has a rag belonging to him in the house: if you think that will be of any service, you may take it, as nobody but I have seen it, for they were all drinking, dancing, dicing, and masquerading when the chap brought it for Nick, and I think it is as well saved out of old Nick's hands as not;" whereupon, the porter went to a closet in the great passage, took out the bundle and gave it me; and here it is wife, and that's all I got for it: so I came running off as fast

as

as my legs could carry me, just as if I had escaped from a den of thieves."

"I never heard such shocking doings in my life," sighed Patty; "but indeed, father, I cannot think but that Mr. Dabble, as you call him, tells things that are not true of his master and mistress;—but all this time, poor Sir Guise is running distracted through the streets." "That's true child," said Robert, "here, take this till I just step into the parlour; Margey, give me the key of the bureau; I must take a little cash with me for fear of accidents."

CHAPTER III.

WHEN Robert had hastily furnished himself, he saluted his wife and daughter, bid them "get something good and comforting for dinner," and taking the bundle, promised to return as soon as he could.

Two hours did poor Robert Irwin, from the purest principles of compassion, uninspired by one grain of esteem, search in vain for his object: at length, slackening his pace, and

returning home with dejected looks and disappointed face, the shouts of a mob attracted his attention; and advancing to explore the cause, he perceived a man harranguing the croud with the utmost violence, while he held another man by the collar, and bawling forth, that "he would take his oath to the person being the one who had escaped from his brother officer the day before, and that he was therefore his prisoner, because they were in partnership; and he would for that reason, as soon part with his right hand as with the man;—for to tell you the truth, I suspect there has been a kind of collusion betwixt partner and prisoner, aye, for aught I know, master Justice too, and d—n me if I find them out, if I don't hang them all like so many onions on a string: for if they cheat me, they have but another to cheat; I had a right to my thirds and never took a farthing."

The face of the prisoner thus assailed, was covered by his spread hands, and the rest of his body was so encircled by the crowd, that very few of those whom curiosity had drawn, could discern their object. At length a
voice

voice from the multitude, called aloud, "who owns this velvet cap?" which the person speaking had placed at the end of a stick elevated above the heads of the people; "I do," answered Robert Irwin, working his way through the crowd:—"I own it, at least I know the head it was upon a little while ago: aye, and there is part of the head now in that fellow's hands."

Irwin elbowed on, and recognized Sir Guise Stuart. The mob, who had sided with the latter from the time the assailant had talked of collusion, his thirds, &c. &c. now began to take an active part in favour of the party assailed, and soon disengaged the Baronet's hair from the gripe of the enemy: while they were doing this, Robert held down the head of the assailant by a manœuvre of the same kind, rendering thereby the release of Sir Guise less difficult, the assailant having soon enough to do to attend to his own head.

Meanwhile a gentleman riding through the street, where the mob had gathered together, stopped his horse, and desired to know the nature

nature of the affray? The person of whom he made the enquiry answered, "Why we hardly know what to make of it, Sir; but it seems to be a false arrest, and upon the person of a poor man out of his senses." With great earnestness and a voice of command, the gentleman signified that he was a magistrate, and ordered the croud to make way. The prisoner first caught his eye, and immediately muffled himself up in the flap of his coat, with a trembling caution that would have justly marked him with suspicion had the action been generally observed. "By what authority fellow," questioned the gentleman, "do you hold that person in custody?"—"By that of the law; I have a writ against him at the suit of Mr. Nicholas Dabble, the attorney."—The gentleman started, and seemed ready to leap from his horse: "Let me look at the writ."—"Partner has it, but I knows my man, and I'll have him to lock-up-house in Shire-lane, and then to Newgate, if he do not pay the money, and moreover clear up another little affair." At this instant Irwin seemed desirous to conceal himself also, and

and going up as by stealth to Sir Guise, he put the bundle into the Baronet's hand; saying, in a whisper, "Take this, Sir, it will bring you off, but don't say any thing about Robert." After this, Irwin mixed in the thickest of the croud.

The gentleman now alighted from his horse, went closer to the parties; in his way to whom a general whisper had circulated, touching the name and authority of the magistrate. This whisper soon caught the bailiff. The late furious assailant would have relinquished his prey, conscious he could not legally hold it, and gone quietly off, but the gentleman, who had an eye upon all his movements, commanded him to tell his name and address, together with that of his partner. — Now the commands of this gentleman, though depending very little on the softer arts of persuasion, were the least refusable in the world. The trembling catch-pole obeyed, attaching to his obedience this curious defence, on which he relied for future favour; "I am sure your honour, if my partner in this business should turn out a rogue, and if

Mr.

Mr. Nicholas Dabble should prove he has outwitted himself, I must be an honest man; I was looking for a coach while partner took hush-money of the prisoner, and boasted of it to my face. Yes; and I went and left a bundle I had the care of at the prisoner's house, though I did not get a farthing of my dues out of the hush-money; for, thought I, if I can get the prisoner to swear bribery to partner, betwixt us both, partner may be hanged for taking money not to see; and cheating me into the bargain. Thus your worship observes plainly what sort of an honest man I must be."

"I do," answered the gentleman, "and you may go about your business."

During this conversation the prisoner nestled himself, as well and as long as he could, amongst the mob; but the gentleman, who had hitherto considered the aggressor in this affray as the principal object, had now leisure to advert to the aggrieved, in whom he soon discovered the person of Sir Guise Stuart.

Many,

Many, we trust, are the readers who, judging from themselves, will be able to conjecture, what must have been the feelings of an honest man, such as John Fitzorton—for he was the magistrate, on this discovery: Few, we hope, judging from themselves, will know how to form any adequate idea of the sensations of the person discovered. They were, however, sufficiently expressed in his behaviour. Concealment no longer possible, humiliated by present, and degraded by past circumstances, all of which came with an overwhelming force upon his memory, he bowed submissive to his protector as to the acknowledged virtue of a superior being. He bent his eyes to the ground, and, as if dreading to be seen by those of John Fitzorton, he held the bundle which Robert had put into his hand, before his face, and then sunk away.

John Fitzorton, after he had received his horse from the person, who had been walking him about, re-mounted and rode on.

Robert Irwin, believing he had escaped unseen, hastened home almost immediately after
he

he had given the parcel to Sir Guise, and on reaching his house, related the adventure in the street to his wife and daughter, observing, that though his honour Sir John would not be displeased at him for going of a message for an unfortunate man, yet to be seen with Sir Guise Stuart, after the shocking thing that had happened at the castle, might offend his honour. "Heaven forbid!" ejaculated his wife. "Surely," observed the daughter, innocently, "if people knew what the world suffered from bad actions, they would try very hard to be good: but, thank God, father, people who have been bad may live to be good again."

"I hope I shall be a proof of that Patty," said Irwin, with tears in his eyes: "all things they say are for the best, love; and, perhaps, Sir Guise having come to our house in this manner, and seeing the judgment that is upon him may make me better all the rest of my life; I am sure I will try, Patty: I will, indeed, love."

Here Robert most affectionately renewed his endearments; and Patty returned them.

them. "Yes," said her mother, whose apron had been to her eyes some time, "'tis a long lane that has no turning; you have but one fault in the world, Robert, and as to that, if you, when you are in your passions, would strike me, and not hurt my child, I should think nothing of it."

"I'll not strike either, and do nothing but love and cherish you both for the time to come, as I do now in this manner"—"d—n me, if I do!" said Robert, with increased emotion, "and poor dear Patty's husband shall sleep in her arms to-night."

Just as this peace-restoring discourse ended, John Fitzorton reached his lodgings, and without discovering any thing particular in his air, or manner of speaking, went up to his apartments. Our little family, therefore, were completely happy, in which state we will leave them to taste the joys of domestic reconciliation, the crowning of which was the enlargement of Patty's husband.

CHAPTER IV.

WE will now follow the steps of one who knew no such comforts, and who, alas! had no hope ever to enjoy them.

Sir Guise Stuart was thrown into such additional disorder by the unexpected sight of the man, whose eye, even in the proudest period of his life, he most sought to avoid, and whose family he had so irreparably injured, that, to meet him under such circumstances, and to receive that service from his equity which could not have been expected from any other motive, sunk deeper into his mind, and seemed harder to bear than any thing that had attended him since he became an outcast. His rescue from the gripe of the law, so much wished before, was now but a secondary object of felicitation: it dwindled even to nothing in comparison of the grand escape from John Fitzorton, who, indeed, was armed with terrors no villainy could brave or endure.

After

After long wandering about without any settled direction, he found himself in Monmouth-street, and as he surveyed the different dresses there hung out at every door, a sudden thought induced him to accept the eager invitation of one of the traders to walk into a shop. The trader seeing a bundle under his arm which, more mechanically than from consciousness, he had still carried, supposed he was come rather to sell than to buy, and desired to see his goods.

Sir Guise, thinking it might promote his plan, favoured the motion; and instead of bartering his watch for something he wished to purchase, he untied the bundle, which he knew was the same that he had hastily packed at his lodgings in the Minorities, and he supposed Robert Irwin had taken it from the bailiff; it contained a change of those things of which Sir Guise stood much in need: but on the parcel being opened, a small packet loosely wrapt emptied its contents on the floor.—“Good heavens!” exclaimed our Baronet, “how came this money here?” Now this exclamation, and the disordered surprise

surprize with which it was made, and the general air, as well as the particular look of Sir Guise Stuart, and more than all his appearing without any covering on his head, his velvet cap having been somehow purloined after Robert owned it, did not prepossess the tradesman in his favour. Indeed he imagined them to be neither more nor less than stolen goods, which the thief wished to turn into money, and that the money itself was amongst the plunder. A few questions, and particularly one, touching his bare head, and slipper'd feet, produced confirmations of this suspicion. Whereupon being a man of very nice honour, as to stolen articles in cases where the odds were against his holding them with any security, he said, "he saw plainly how that bundle had been obtained, and unless a better account was given than had yet been offered, he should feel himself called upon, as an honest man, to apprehend him as a rogue—for, pray, how came you to be so much surprized to find those five guineas, if they were your property?"

"Because,"

“Because,” said the Baronet, very truly, “I knew no more of them than you did.”

“That is rather singular too,” observed the clothier, “how they should get into an honest man’s bundle without his knowledge. Secondly, be so good to tell me where you came from? and, thirdly, who you are?”

To neither of these questions could Sir Guise give any satisfactory reply. In truth, he did not even attempt it, and his silence was interpreted into a tacit confession of his villainy.—“Well, come,” said the trader, “there is some shame in you however, and as you may live to see your error I will let it pass. As to the linen in that parcel ’tis out of my line, nor should I choose to buy it if it were not. ’Tis a disagreeable thing to put things forth, and have them owned, but if you wish to purchase any articles you see in the shop or at the door”—here the trader cast a longing eye at the five guineas which Sir Guise had picked up—“why I will deal with you as if you were as honest a man as myself.”

Sir Guise wanted not sagacity to perceive that the laying out part, at least, of the money

was

which

which had thus, unexpectedly, crept into his bundle, would be the only thing to save him, and he was glad the matter had taken that turn.—“I came into your shop, Sir, not to sell but to purchase, and though you have wronged me by your suspicions I will deal with you. I have a particular occasion for a drab coloured coat and waistcoat, I noticed hanging at your door, and the broad brimmed hat I perceived on a peg over it.” “Here they are, but here is a snug brown bob goes with them—better have that, and you’ll be all of a piece,” said the dealer, who did not doubt but our adventurer was going to take refuge from his pursuers for the late or former offenses, in the dress of a quaker. Sir Guise approved of the wig extremely, “and what think you of these brown worsted stockings, and as to shoes I can fit you in a trice—there, Sir, I’ll be bound for their fitting as well as if they were made for you—but, perhaps, you had rather have boots,” observed the trader, who had now got into the spirit of trade.—“I can suit you there too—I call my shop every body’s warehouse—Looke, Sir, and

and here's a curious pair of stocking breeches just of the colour—and now you are set up—unless you should like this horseman's coat, which, you perceive, is just in the same style."

The Baronet agreed to the whole lot,—“well then,” said the proprietor, “I’ll be at a word—for I never make two prices—they are your’s for the five guineas which so much surprized you just now.”

“You may put them up,” said Sir Guise, “but I do not see how I shall carry them—could I not get somebody to take them as far as ———” “O, yes, any where,” interposed the dealer—“there’s a fellow going by the door who will I dare say be glad of the job—shall I call him?” “If you please,” answered Sir Guise. The man expressed his readiness to attend the gentleman; he said he was very poor, and had been looking in vain all the day for employment. The goods were soon packed so as to go into the bundle, except the brimmed beaver, which the dealer, facetiously said, would be most easily carried on the new owner’s head,

“where,” added he smiling, and thinking he might take any freedom with a gentleman as honest as himself, “where I perceive there is a peg for it.” The five miraculous guineas being paid into the long opened palm of the dealer the porter took up his load, and the purchaser desiring him to follow, the business ended not a little to the satisfaction of all parties.

Thus Sir Guise, who within a few hours, had been taken for a madman and a thief, escaped by good luck from being carried into custody in either of those characters: yet the last six and thirty hours had been the most disastrous of his life. They were the first he had ever past in the school of adversity, where he was taught the rudiments of what, to such dispositions, is only to be learned in that academy.

CHAPTER V.

THE interesting objects which our adventurer saw at the hospitable Robert Irwin's, and the different impediments he had met with

with in his way, had consumed so much time that the second day of his wanderings was far spent before he found himself extricated from the several ills which had annoyed and threatened him.

At length the world was once more free before him: yet he was no less perplexed, and uncertain what road to take, or what plan to pursue, than at the first moment of his emigration. In truth, his embarrassment had considerably increased. In each of the disasters that had overtaken him, he collected something of the general and honest sense of mankind respecting his character. This might be gathered from the discourse of the rabble at lady Tempest's fashionable rout, and even from the reflections of the sons and daughters of riot in a common night-house. Even the bounty of his old servants, the Irwins, was but the alms of charitable natures whose pity was excited, on general principles, while the impression of their abhorrence of him, as an individual, remained in full force. In the neglect and malignity that he experienced from the friends

and partners of his misdeeds, he felt that vice cannot be faithful even to its chosen associates; and in the accidental good office which had been afforded him by the superb John Fitz-orton, he could not but perceive that the service rendered by the magistrate was distinct from the sentiment entertained by the man, and that while the justice of the one bestowed official relief, the other exhibited, even in his silence, the profound of contempt.

It was, indeed, under this accumulated consciousness of his own unworthiness, thus successively forced upon him, that he went into the second-hand cloaths shop, the directing idea being simply to purchase some dress that might serve as a screen to veil him from general obloquy. Shame, fear, and, we will hope, something like regeneration of virtuous emotion, even though that emotion had been in a manner wrung from him, went to the formation of this idea.

Behold then our Baronet followed by his temporary squire, fallying forth with as little arrangement what point of the compass to steer by, as the squire or knight of Cervantes.

In

In woefulness of countenance, indeed, there was some real resemblance betwixt the immortal Quixote, and our forlorn Baronet, but, alas! none either in their dispositions, or motives of enterprize. Sir Guise Stuart had neither the knight of la Mancha's extravagance of honour, nor his wish of acquiring fame by heroic deeds: by the rescue of innocence oppressed, or the voluntary encounter of dangers and of death. Indeed, our Baronet's sole design, in the purchasing his coat of mail, was to escape the wounding eyes of those whom he himself had outraged: and had the honest, the misguided, hero of the Spanish story, met him in his career, and been previously made acquainted with his course of life, he would have been thought a giant of guilt and necromancy, more deserving of the avenging lance than any monster he had contended with in the progress of his adventures.

His attendant squire, indeed, had no trace of the merry-hearted Sancho; but followed the steps of his employer with gloomy fidelity, from one place to another, till the

shades of evening, and some more powerful circumstances induced him to ask our hero whither he was going? This question received no answer, because it was found unanswerable: Sir Guise had been long ruminating what he should do with himself. The adherent ventured, at length, what follows: "Possibly, Sir, you have lost your way, or may be you overheard what the man said to me in the shop about you, and so don't like to go into your old haunt, wherever it may be, lest I should run back and tell him. Now if this should be the case I will tell you a secret. I am a distressed bit of a gentleman myself, and when an odd thing lies in my way, such as a stray bundle, a few loose guineas, or what not, why I have no objection to it, and for all I am in such a pickle now, am as keen a fellow as you can be. In a word, I am one of the sort—and, therefore, you have nothing to fear from me: For all that perhaps you don't like we should join forces—some, in our line, like doing business alone; others are for partnership.—If you prefer the latter we must take a loving pot,
or

or bottle together, and say good luck to one another. We are near to the sign of the Hand-in-hand, where some of the sort meet; it lies just cleverly for the great west road, has good stabling, a knowing ostler, and a man may be in town or country, horseback or on foot, in five minutes."

This discourse might have terrified a stouter heart than that of Sir Guise, not, perhaps, on account of the thing itself, for he had long associated with probably more guilty pests of society than the poor rogue then at his elbow. Indeed had our Baronet been made of more courageous materials it is not impossible but that the slight hold which conscience yet had of him, and an almost despairing situation, might have then united him with the society to which his associate alluded: but a certain dread that seized his joints, and the fasting and fatigue, which weighed upon his limbs, extorted from him, in a sort of half uttered, and half repressed way, this heart-riving apostrophe, "O! Sir Guise, Sir Guise Stuart, that you should be brought to all this!"

To use the best and most apposite language of the inmost descriptions of the passions and emotions of nature, "as if that name shot from the deadly level of a gun had murdered him,"—"Great God!" apostrophised his astonished companion! "and is it possible I should again be in the same place with Sir Guise Stuart? I thought, indeed, I knew something of his face, disfigured as it is by time, and by that long beard."—Indeed the latter was then of three days' growth, being routed by the bailiffs before the dressing hour, and having had scarce a moment since, that could be devoted to adornment.—"Ah! Sir Guise," continued the follower, "if you are really he who had the great hall, in Somersetshire, where I knew you, and are owner of the abbey in the west of England, you are the bitterest enemy I ever had in the world, and have brought me to this pass—but, as it appears you have brought yourself to nearly as bad, I won't—no—d—n me, I won't say any more—we must now both of us live as we can."

"And

"And who are you?" faltered out Sir Guise, scarcely articulating.

"See," replied the other, "how things come about—Don't you remember Giles Smith, though that's not the name I go by now—Don't you remember the combustible business that brought to the ground old master Atwood's house? and don't you remember smuggling off his daughter Jenny? a d—mn'd affair that—my first devil's work as I may say for you—and though you gave me all the work of the hall—I was a mason too you know in the next parish—I never throve since, but took to thieving, and if I show my face again at the Old-Bailey 'twill go hard with me. I did but just nick it last time. Take care how you get there, Sir Guise, if you have been at the bar before. They mark their men out of a set, as sportsmen do a bird out of a whole covey. They had winged me before—but mum—I won't do you any harm—Walls have ears, and this is a notorious part of the town we have got into.—But what am I to call you? you don't go by your own name of course.—The

shopman whispered he would make it worth my while if I would call, and let him know where you took me to, but I'd be d—d first—though you have been my ruin—for as I see you are one of us—and upon the shift—I'll not be the man to bring you up before your time. If we can't be true to one another 'tis very hard. I don't ask what you have got in this bundle besides the cloaths you bought of the Monmouth-street man, I find you picked it up by the *way of Cheapside*, so perhaps you hardly know yourself. But you see the condition I am in, and if you can help me to a trifle for back and belly I hope you will; for, to tell you the truth, I am as poor as a rat, and as tired as a dog, and what is worse have not broke my fast to day."

"Nor have I scarcely," said Sir Guise, "and if you have any place where we can stop, without any danger of being disturbed, I will," added he with a heavy sigh, "do what little I can for you."

"As to that," observed Smith, "we can't be better than at the Hand-in-hand-at present."

present. 'Tis just between the hours: those who are for the country are off; and the town chaps won't meet till midnight, after all the public places are shut. Give me your hand, this is the snug door: Lord how well I know him—but don't tremble so—Though I am no better than I should be to be sure, I am true to my set as you can be.

CHAPTER VI.

EXHAUSTED by what he had already undergone in body and mind, Sir Guise felt for a moment, an indifference to what became of him, and suffered himself to be led into the house. The ragged condition of the one, and the shabby gentility of the other, assisted by the broad brimmed hat, assorted well enough with the different appearances assumed by the nimble-fingered race, and on calling for a bottle of port with biscuits and rusks, they were shown into a private room. When the wine was brought, its price was to be paid on the spot; "a rule, which may perhaps, surprize you," said Smith to Sir

Guise, when the waiter was gone ; “ but if you consider the precarious situation of the customers who frequent this house, many of whom are taken away to prison without a moment’s warning ” —

“ To prison ! ” repeated Sir Guise.

“ You will not wonder,” continued Smith, “ that every thing here is for ready money only.” “ Are there no persons that frequent it but of the description you allude to ? ” asked the alarmed Sir Guise. “ O yes,” answered Smith, “ but it is a rule of the house, to set down every man as a rogue whether he be such or not ; but don’t alarm yourself, for at any rate we are safe ; I am an old customer, and was once a leading member of a club held in the room above, and you will of course, be taken for my friend.” “ I see,” cried Sir Guise, “ that circumstances have rendered me obnoxious to mistakes, wherever I go, I assure you, Smith.” “ Pshaw, don’t vex yourself about that,” interrupted Smith, who was settled in his faith about Sir Guise, and had begun on the wine and biscuits,

cuits, with great diligence; "we are liable to mistakes: come, come, do as I do."

While the Baronet steeped his rusk in some wine, Smith adverted again to the contents of the bundle, and asked, "for what purpose he had made a purchase of the quaker-suit of cloaths, and the drab riding-coat? Come, Sir Guise, open your heart at once," added he; "you were always a cautious man: a shy cock, as we say, you know—whatever prank you have played, that dress will bring you through, ha! ha! ha!—a good thought—who will suspect a prim quaker to be a bundle-stealer?"

Sir Guise not relishing this suspicion, told Smith the adventures of the last eight and forty hours.

"Curious," said his comrade, "a very curious story: yes, I always thought what would come of your marrying that termagant." Another supply of wine and biscuit was ordered. "Apropos, what say you to a slice of butter? rusks and biscuits are dry eating by themselves," said he. "I see clearly now what you are upon: you think
you

you may have better luck in a new dress; your old one, I guess, is too well known; to tell you the truth, I should like to adopt your plan: suppose therefore," said he, as soon as the waiter again disappeared, "I cast this old skin of mine and put on yours, while you make yourself into a Simon Pure.—Observe, I can draw the bolt of the door and it is done in a twinkling."

Sir Guise, who anxiously wished an opportunity to put on his disguise, agreed to the proposal. "Strip then is the word," said Smith, fastening the door and dropping his tatters with a dispatch, yet with a composure that shewed he was familiar with expedients. But Sir Guise, though no less dissolute, had moved in the higher paths of dishonour; had been accustomed to more splendid vicissitudes, and could not easily divest himself of the external manners of a gentleman. He was therefore, more impeded in his progress, and not a little embarrassed at making an entire change of apparel before the man, whom in the proud day of authority, he had made a subordinate instrument in the most

atrocious

atrocious actions. An observation, however, from Smith, on hearing a noisy party coming into the next room, and calling riotously for half a dozen bottles from the "good-luck-bin," soon quenched the few blushes of ingenuous shame that stood in the way of our Baronet's dispatches, and he was equipped in a few minutes at all points fit for the tabernacle. "I take it," whispered Smith, "there is one of the early gangs come in, and by their spirits I judge, have been pretty successful.—'Ecod I like myself so well in this green coat and scarlet waistcoat, that I am half tempted to make a little tour of my own across the country. I do think I should have some luck in your coat, my old friend, especially, if I stood in your shoes, or slippers, which is the same thing, and red-morocco will not at all suit your dress: these shoes of mine will set you on your legs famously; well, what say you, shall we try our fortunes? Who knows?—There is no moon.—Nice and dark: we are just off the stones; the lamps are never half lighted at the skirts of the town:—at any rate, we had better be off

now,

now, unless you are determined on the third bottle."

Sir Guise declared, "that he had not any more money, and did not think, till he had rummaged his pockets, he could have found enough to pay for the two former." "No," said Smith, incredulously: "what the deuce shall we do about the waiter?—O! I have it;—stop, let me do up your parcel:—there, it will be much lighter for you now.—Do you stay here, and I will go and speak to Scuttle the waiter, who is a good natured fellow, and when I have settled it with him, I will come and fetch you: for between ourselves, some of the hue-and-cry gentry will be taking their rounds presently."

Sir Guise felt uneasy at the thoughts of being left alone, and as rogues are exactly as suspicious as honest men are confident, he asked tremulously, "why they should not go and speak to Scuttle together. I will give him one of the handkerchiefs, or cravats out of the bundle: will not that do?" said the Baronet." "No, I will tell you how it shall be;

be; I should not have thought of giving that fellow a thing of that value."

Smith opened the door, looked into the passage, where not seeing any body, he took the hand of Sir Guise, who had, indeed, taken Smith by the skirts of the coat, and moving quietly, they gained the street without any interruption. "And now," said Smith, "we must determine on something; do we part, or do we keep together?—See, people are pouring apace into the Hand-in-hand. Suppose we cross over the way, and then we can think. Plaguy dark. Mind how you go; and for fear we should miss one another, when you get on the pavement, cry hem."

Being arrived on the other side, Sir Guise gave the signal; paused a few minutes, then repeated it to as little purpose: and after a longer interval hemmed once more. His companion, who had in the first instance, been kind enough to carry the bundle for Sir Guise Stuart, now carried it for himself. In a word, Smith instead of crossing over, figured into the very house which he affected

to

to quit by stealth, and left his associate from whom he had nothing more to expect, to go where he thought proper: perfectly satisfied he would never either think or dare to look for him, the said Smith, in the Hand-in-hand hotel.

Thus was Sir Guise, after having made another discovery of the extent of his wide spreading seductions, again driven unprotected into the street. What is far worse, that conscience, which, had it been clear, might have darted a chearful ray of light from within, told him, his lot though hard, was merited. Incapable of choice, he took the path in the direction it lay, from where he had crossed; an afflicting sigh broke from his heart, and he continued his route in one un-deviating line for many hours, during which, he was so absorbed in an abyss of reflection on the events of the past and present time, that his fearful nature had no leisure to yield to any apprehensions from solitude and darkness.

The fate of Sir Armine, the exile of Charles, Caroline, Dennison and the Monk, the

the flaming cottage of the Attwoods, the plots upon Jane, the treachery of Miles, Dabble, and their banditti, the tyranny of lady Tempest, and the scorn of John Fitz-orton; all haunted his midnight path, and impelled him forward, almost without knowing that his feet were in motion.

At day break, he perceived himself on a road he had often traversed, under all the smiling auspices of fortune and of power; by mere accident he had struck into the broad high way that led to the county in which stood the abbey.

Yet, to what end should he go farther in that road? to what purpose should he take any other? was there in any part of the town or country a being of either sex, whose eye would gladden, or whose heart would bound to greet him? to whom, either his prosperity would be welcome, or his misfortunes endearing? Should he pursue his present track, even to the abbey, that venerable mansion, he thought, was now a miserable ruin like himself, and even that ruin not at his command. Although Henry and Olivia might

might be at the castle, would they afford him succour? it was madness to suppose it. Should they be absent, was not an indelible mark set upon him by every member of their household? Could he return to the hospitable house of the Irwins? there, the terrifying furniture of his dismantled abbey rose to his view, and there, yet more tremendous, was John Fitzorton!

Such were the questions he put to himself, and such their replies: while both served but to point the forlorn state of his character, and condition. "Whither then shall I go, and what will become of me?" said he, smiting his breast.

But, all this time, he went rapidly on, and having neither the wish nor the means to stop, he out-travelled in the course of the day all that had partially got the start of him for a while.

Towards evening the western coaches passed him, and stopped to change horses, at about an hundred yards after they left him behind. As soon as he came up with them, one of the coachmen as he was going by, exclaimed,

exclaimed, "Egad master, you have got a brave driving coat there which you don't seem to know what to do with." "Have you any inclination for it?" answered Sir Guise, who had found it unwieldy to bear on his back, and intolerable to carry under his arm. "You'll ask too much for my pocket, I fear, but I will tell you what I will do with you, I know you quakers don't use many words. I will give you his majesty's picture in gold, and a ride any where on this side Plymouth, if you are going that way: I have but one passenger, who I believe is in his first sleep; what say you, friend?"

Our adventurous Baronet approved the first part of the proposal very well; for though the great coat might at some future period be useful, the offered guinea would be so immediately; he did not see the advantage of the offered ride, and yet it being necessary to go somewhere, he thought he should, during that ride, have a better opportunity to think, and come to some conclusion, especially as it was likely to be a stormy night, in a coach than on foot. "Well, friend,"

friend," said the coachman facetiously, as he was coming out of the house, where he had been taking his dram; "shall thee and I shake hands upon it, a spike and span new guinea, look'e, and as easy a coach as ever man slept in: if you have a mind for a nap, you will think yourself swinging in a commodore's cot." "There is no bed to be had here, sir," said the landlord of the inn, "we have been obliged to turn some of our customers away, and so I think you can't do better than accept the coachman's offer." "It shall be so then," said Sir Guise, delivering the coat. The driver opened the door, and helped our quaker-seeming hero into the coach, where he was scarcely seated, though it was too dark to make any use of his eyes, when a most violent snoring assailed his ears. "Perhaps," said the landlord, "the gentleman would like to take something." "Please to bring me a roll, or a crust of bread, and a glass of brandy," said the Baronet; but while they were gone to fetch them, he regretted his having given the order, reflecting he had no money to pay for it, and he
could

could not press for the guinea so abruptly ; when it was brought, he asked with some hesitation, " whether the landlord could give him change." " No, d—n it, don't change for a crust and a glass of brandy and water," said the coachman, " I hate dry bargains : I always think they never thrive with a body ;—set it up to me, landlord." Sir Guise asked if he would partake of it. " Enough is as good as a feast, friend : warm your own inside with it, and let me warm my outside by hawfelling the coat, for it begins to mizzle." While the coachman folded himself up in his new purchase, Sir Guise finished his repast, which was in truth much wanted ; and after the usual adieus, the vehicle continued its journey.

CHAPTER VII.

FOR the first three or four miles Sir Guise thought intently, but the very intensity of that thought, his former violent exercise, both of body and mind, and the lulling motion of the coach, disposed him, at length, to

to imitate his unknown fellow-traveller by falling asleep.

How long he remained in this comfortable oblivion of himself, and of his misfortunes, cannot be known; but, ere it was yet day, a sudden jerk of the vehicle shattered one of the side glasses from the frame, and both our slumberers awoke at the same instant. This brought on a short conversation between the passengers, one of whom said he was happy on waking out of a nap to find he had got a companion; "not," added he, "that I am properly an inside passenger, only as there was not any one in the stage, and as I am an acquaintance of the coachman's, and 'twas likely to be an ugly night, he gave me a lift; but if you have any objection, Sir, as I am but a servant, and in a manner, out of my place—if you'll pardon the joke, I'll turn out, and get upon the box."—Sir Guise, whom recent events had taught something of humility, told his fellow-traveller there was no occasion; whereupon the former speaker continued: "Going into Devon, I hope, Sir? as I shall then have more of your good com-
pany.

pany. I stop a few miles on this side Dartmouth. If you are of those parts I dare say you may know either me or some of my masters, God bless their honours, and all the family!—such a family as would do your heart and soul good to know them: the Fitzortons, Sir, I mean; a brave old house their castle; we shall see it a few miles on this side Dartmouth: a noble park too, and as fine gardens as you shall wish to look at; but what are they? nothing!—not worth thinking about in comparison of the family they belong to. A house, park, and a garden, are fine things, and God gave them, and God be praised for it; but where they are placed or built there they stand like flocks; but good people, who can move about to find people, who have only a cottage and bit of garden at the end of it, are better to my thoughts than all the gardens and castles in the world.”

A profound and audible sigh now caught the ear of the person who had been speaking, and a pause ensued on both sides, in the course of which, the sigh was repeated.

“ I don't know why, but it is a shocking thing to hear any body sigh,” observed the other passenger: “ it always makes me sigh too. May be your honour may be uneasy at something that is on your mind, and do not like to hear talking. Some do and some don't. Our Mr. Sir John can't bear to hear a word spoken by man, woman, or child, when he is vexed or uneasy, but must have it all to himself, though it lasts for a week. If you do but say a word, he will frown and growl at you, and go and lock himself up; but Squire Henry, God love his dear tender heart! the more kind things you say to him the more he loves you, and though he may sometimes be too heart-full to make you any answer, when he comes to himself he will speak to you so kindly, and thank you for your love and trouble, that it would make you cry like a child, I am sure it has me a thousand times, to hear him. Now as I don't know which of these ways is your way, sir, if I offend, or make you worse by talking, only say so, and I will not speak another word all the way.”

The

The generous speaker having waited some time without receiving any check, imagined conversation might amuse and relieve his fellow traveller, on which idea he proceeded; "Ah! good sir, we have all our sorrows, and the best often the most, as I dare say you know by yourself. Why even most of our family at the castle have had terrible trials. To begin with Sir Armine, all the world has heard of his goodness, for all that, he had his enemies, and one who I fear shortened his life."

"I fear so too," faltered a voice that startled the ear of the observer.

"You have heard of the story then, and no doubt," resumed the other speaker, "know many more sad stories that go along with that affair. If so, you can be no stranger to the shocking doings amongst some neighbours of ours.—Thank God Almighty, the storm is pretty well blown over now: but there will be a long account for somebody to settle by and by. Doubtless then you know the abbey-family?"

"I do," answered the person addressed.

“Aye, I don’t wonder at your sighing,” observed the other, “they have made my heart ach many and many a time. Then I dare say, you are no stranger to Sir Guise Stuart:—there’s a monster of a man for you! I do not think there is man, woman, or child, in the whole world, that cares whether he is dead or alive.”

“O yes, there is,” continued the person, heavily sighing, “more than one.”—“May be you know miss Caroline, his daughter, sir, as kindly, dutiful, and pretty a creature as ever broke the bread of life. God knows where she is now; and I am acquainted with another as good and handsome as she, who wishes this monster of a man well: but I find it has all come home to him at last. Such a story did I hear of him yesterday in London, at an old servant’s of his, one Robert Irwin, where I went to take orders for the castle from our Mr. Sir John, who has lodgings at Robert’s:—such a story!—Ah good sir, the wicked never prosper long together. This very Sir Guise, is, I find, gone all to ruins, turned out of house and home, and with five guineas,

guineas, which Robert, out of pure charity, put into his bundle, is now roaming about, God knows where. There is a change for you, fir! yet how could he expect any better?"

"A change indeed!" cried his auditor with pathetic energy.

"Yes, resumed the relater, "I would not have a, a, a,—friend of mine told of it for the world; nay, I would not wish any of our family to know of it, 'speciously Squire Henry; and I am sure, Mr. Sir John will not mention it to him for reasons good. The wicked man is going about under God's judgments: I should not at all wonder if we should hear in a little time he were hanged, should you, fir?—And yet," continued the narrator, "poor man, I can't help pitying him. If I had not received orders from my master Mr. Sir John, and you know, fir, when a servant has got his orders, he has only to do them outright in town or country, I should have tried to hunt him up; for though I think him the worst creature that lives, I have my reasons why I would not let him

want a mouthful of bread, and a drop of drink, and a bed to lie upon, while I had it of my own to give. He is now with the Almighty's angry finger upon him, for it is not us, but he, you know, sir, to punish people; to my thoughts, such a wicked man as Sir Guise Stuart is more to be pitied than an honest man in the time of his trouble: because you know, sir, conscience says such comforting things to the one, while the other can find nothing but taunts and torments within and without. And now I'll say no more about him; for you must know, we never mention his name, nor have not done a long while at the castle; and for my part, I sometimes with the abbey was sunk underground, that none of our folks might look at it, then we might be happier even than we were. Indeed I should not have run on thus now, for I am no very great talker; but as I heard you sigh, and as I think a man had better sigh for the distress and wickedness of another man than for his own, and as I imagined you liked to hear rather than speak, I have gone on. See, sir, day is beginning
to

to break. Come, good sir, we shall have the sun up presently, and then we shall be able to look about us."

CHAPTER VIII.

IT is not easy to conceive any mortal man in a more comfortless situation than Sir Guise Stuart during the time this harangue was carrying on by the speaker, with a most sincere hope of affording him relief. In all the simple truth of an honest heart, he here heard himself at once commiserated and despised. The cause and effect of all he had suffered was placed in natural order before him, and all this from a man who avowed himself in a state of servitude, but whom he knew at the same time, to be arrayed in all the majesty of virtues, which made the once lofty Baronet shrink in the comparison. The only favourable circumstance was the darkness, which had veiled him from the eye of his accuser, and that darkness was passing away.

The morn had no sooner rendered objects distinct, than it appeared to the companion of Sir Guise, that he had been addressing himself to a quaker. This accounted at once for the little that had been said in reply, and that little expressed with so much energy of pity for the guilty wanderer; moreover, the disguise was more friendly than the wearer of it had conjectured, for the haranguer, even when the deciding beams of the sun shone full upon every thing, had not the most remote suspicion that he was in company with the man he had delineated. The case was reversed with respect to the delineator, who not having an atom of disguise about him, body or mind, was instantly discovered to be True George, who had upon the whole, more reason to quarrel with the conduct of Sir Guise, than any of those whom its crookedness had involved, but who was perhaps, amongst those that most compassionated him.

About an hour after the sun had risen, the vehicle made its usual stop to breakfast. George opened the door, leaped out, and with the respectful manners that marked his character,

character, took off his hat and offered his arm to his companion, then directed a waiter to shew the gentleman into a parlour, and modestly betook himself into the kitchen.

Our unfortunate knight now meditated an escape from his fellow-traveller, by insinuating that he was arrived near the end of his journey, and that he would perform the little that remained on foot.

As he was projecting this over the first cup of tea, the coachman made his appearance with the purchase-money of the coat, which he laid upon the table, and then said, pointing to a small packet of letters tied together, "and I suppose, friend, these are your property, at least they were found in the great-coat pocket and are of no service to me."

Sir Guise on receiving them, read on the superscription of the outer letter his own name and address, and remembered shifting them from the dress he gave to Smith at the Hand-in-hand. "Very well," observed he with an air of attempted indifference, "you may lay them down there, they are of no

consequence." "That you know best. Friend George, the young man who rode with you, said, he thought they were, and talked of coming in to ask you whether you can give him any tidings of the person they are directed to. You know him no doubt, or else you would not have so many of his letters to keep. He is but a bad bargain be where he will, and I wonder you quaker-folks should have any thing to do with him: but that is none of my affair, friend; your servant, the horses will soon be ready:—I will keep my word;—you may ride as far as you like. I wanted George to read one of the letters to us, but the devil a bit. I don't suppose that fellow would read a word now of a letter that had not his name at top on it, an' though it were all against himself. I never see'd such a chap: we'll make haste wi' breakfast. We've a long pull yet, and all up hill; so I'll now go and take a sup with George, and then jehu!"

The moment the coachman departed, the Baronet, who had been groaning in spirit at the mention of the letters, turned to a large
glass

glafs that hung on one fide of the room, and thought he could place the wig and hat to much greater advantage. To which end he took them haftily off, and was juft folding his own hair fo as to make it lie fmooth under the wig, when with nimble, yet refpectful fteps, True George came running in, and faw the very man he was going to make fo many enquiries after; fo that inftead of asking the fupposed quaker what was become of Sir Guife, it would have been more in point to have enquired of Sir Guife, what he had done with the quaker?

The difmay of Sir Guife was not inconfiderable, but the perfon by whom he had been detected, had not talent, or at leaft no relifh for that fort of ridicule which expofes misfortune, however merited; and to inflict pain, was as oppofite to his nature, as to deferve its infliction on himfelf. “Bless God! then,” faid he, “you are found without looking for you any further: as to your drefling like a quaker, fir, I can eafily guefs you would wifh to be any thing but Sir Guife: and as to what I have faid of you, fir, I wifh

it was not true with all my heart ; but we may as well pretend to say it is night when it is broad day ; truth is truth."

"For God sake leave me !" said Sir Guise, powerfully moved, "let me stop here."

"No, not here: no, no, get into the coach again, and then if I may ride with you, something may be thought of;—see, sir, the horses are put to, and the coachman will be here in a moment. Come, I will help to put your head to rights again. So,—that's good, so much for the wig,—there,—now for the hat.—Now you are as good a quaker again as ever you was."

The good-natured fellow had just made him up, when the coachman came with his summons. "Coachee," said he, "the gentleman is so kind as to permit me to keep my seat in the inside a little longer, and so with your leave, I'll"—"Aye, that you shall, Mr. George, and welcome, though I were to pay for you an inside from London to Plymouth." George gave him his hand in thanks ; then out of that abundant loving-kindness with which his blameless heart

over-

overflowed, he opened the coach-door to Sir Guise, as he had done before, and got in after him.

Whether attracted unawares by the charm of integrity and worth, as it was conspicuous in this estimable young man; or whether urged by motives of despair arising from a survey of his own situation, brought about by varied duplicity; or whether his heart was pressed by a load that impelled him in mere relief to disburthen itself; Sir Guise, at length, treated George with a candour to which that heart had long been a stranger. "O! Mr. True," said he, "after what has past it would be vain to conceal my deplorable state any longer; and I will, therefore, in this desolation of my affairs, ask you what course you think I can pursue to save me from the world and from myself?"—He then unfolded the whole of his disastrous adventures; and concluded by observing, that to undergo again all that he had seen, heard, and endured, for the three past days, would be worse than death; since every moment of that time had proved to him he had not a friend

friend on the face of the earth, and convinced him he did not deserve one.

The degree of self abasement to which a human being must be reduced before such a forlorn declaration can be extorted from him, cannot easily be imagined. It presupposes a condition so destitute, that perhaps before the idea of it can gain admission into the mind of man, all that sustains, or elevates his nature, must have taken its flight; yet the confession could not have been trusted to a heart more full of good faith and charity, than that of the honest creature, who heard, and who could not but believe it was as sincere in the feeling, as he had but too many reasons to know it was true as to fact.

A more daring offender, or more properly to express ourselves, a man with like abandoned principles, but sustained by more constitutional audacity than Sir Guise Stuart, as in the case of his compeer Valentine Miles, might have resisted the rapacious tyranny of a prostitute, exalted into a wife; he might have contended with all the viprous train that envenomed that alliance; possessed
of

of more animal courage, he might have answered force by force, foiled stratagem by stratagem; and, by uniting the spirit of the tyger with the wiles of the fox, he might have struggled for his rights, such as they were, and perhaps regained them. But finding himself beset on all hands, and strongly pursued even by the beasts of prey that had fed upon his honour, peace, and fortune, his heart died within him and he fled.

True George was for many a mile as taciturne as he had been before loquacious: at length he fervently ejaculated—"The Lord have mercy upon all miserable sinners! Oh! Sir Guise, I would not be you for all that is on the face of the earth, or at the bottom of the sea."—To this another long pause succeeded, which made Sir Guise suppose that even this genuine child of pity had abandoned him. But the same principles that induced the worthy adherent of the Fitzortons to attempt the relief of a supposed stranger in distress, by conversation that might beguile the way, led him to preserve silence, now that person was known, lest he might advert

advert to any thing which could increase affliction.

He did not again break silence till he knew by contiguous objects that he was approaching scenes which must greatly increase the shame of his convicted fellow traveller: A little to the left stood the hall of the good Partington, and the comfortable farm-house of the bounty-guarded Atwoods—the family of the injured Jane were almost in view.

“ I think Sir,” observed George, drawing a green blind before the window of the coach, at the side on which these objects lay—“ I think, Sir, the light may be rather troublesome, and the country to your right, just where we now are, is more open than this to the left.” In this remark the good creature had no view whatever but to prevent the infliction of pain to a heart already overcharged; for every lineament of the Baronet’s countenance, the former comeliness of which we have before particularized, denoted, beyond all question, variety of suffering. But the design of the good-natured
George

George being thus answered, another long silence took place ; at length leaping at an idea that made him stand almost upright in the coach, he exclaimed, " I have it, Sir ! I have it ! " and then a fourth pause, as if to shape and arrange this new idea. " Good heaven ! " thought George, " and is this poor sinful being without house, home, money, or friends ? and not any body to speak to him but his conscience, which must needs be angry with him ? Why he has nothing for it but to knock himself on the head to get out of his own way, and that would not answer his purpose either ; for he is no more fit to die than to live : yet if he should lay violent hands on himself now that all the world frowns on him, as to be sure he deserves, I should never rest in my bed, nor, perhaps, would somebody else either ; and she might even hate me for letting a poor wretch die in his wickedness, when by a little christian charity I might have made him live to repent. "

CHAPTER IX.

SUCH were some of the reflections that occupied the mind of George during those stops in conversation, which the conscience of the person, who was the cause of them, translated so differently.

But the journey was now almost performed, and some decisive measure was to be pursued. "Sir Guise," said George, "it does not signify talking; while a man is in the world he must live, whether he is good or bad; I am but a servant, and you are a Baronet, but as you don't seem to know what to do with yourself at this present sitting, will you be ruled by me?"

Sir Guise assured him he would; but that he did not care what happened to him.—Truly to speak, the Baronet was sunk to a degree so extreme, that fear and hope equally forsook him, and he might have been led about at the pleasure of enemy or friend.

No sooner, therefore, had George, who had been watching the mile stones, with his head.

head out of the window, gained the spot, than he called to the coachman to stop, jumped out of the vehicle, hat in hand, as before, and when Sir Guise had followed him, "Will," says he to the driver, "I find the quakerly gentleman does not cleverly know the road he is to go, and may lose his way, except he is with somebody that can help him out a little; we shall go together, and if we strike into the foot path at the end of that lane, we shall save near two miles; and as the gentleman is rather sick with his ride, a little walking may do us both good: So I wish you a good journey, Will, and many thanks for your kindness. Our castle has always some good ale in it you know: Good-day, though it's getting dark enough to say good-night."

While George was talking to the coachman, Sir Guise had an opportunity to look about him, and, however fatigued, it was not without considerable anxiety, that he perceived he was at a point that conducted both horse and footman by a bridle way, or a cut across the fields, either to that parish which
was

was once his own, or to that which still appertained to the Fitzortons. His apprehensive nature caught alarm at this, and he fearfully asked George if he was going to discover him? condemning his own absurd feelings for suffering him to be drawn so near the place in the world he would most avoid.

“As to that, Sir,” observed George, “I take it all places are pretty much alike to you just now, only I have my reasons why I think that where I am going to take you to will be the best; as to discovering you in that dress, I don’t think that your own poor dear banished child, miss Caroline, nor somebody else I know in the world, could make you out in that dress, if you keep your hat and wig on: For,” added he, “you are no more like what you was, in any shape, than you are like my squire Henry, God love his heart! and besides you promised me for once you would be ruled by me.” “And so I will,” sighed out Sir Guise, following George, who had been getting through the lane all the time he conversed: “Only one thing I have to observe, Sir,” resumed George, “as soon

soon as I have housed you, where I mean, you must let me run off to deliver Mr. Sir John's orders at the castle, and when I have done there, for I am but a servant as I said, I will come and see you settled better."

"As you think fit," answered the humiliated Baronet.—"Then please to take hold of my coat, and pull at it as much as you will I'll get you on.—Hark! we shall now hear how time goes—Is that your clock or ours?—I beg pardon—is that from the abbey or castle? But that's no matter. 'Tis six o'clock you hear. How short the days get! Another quarter of an hour, and our noses will smell the fire I hope, and see the faggot sparkle, and hear the kettle sing to make us a dish of tea.—All you have to do is to mind your wig and hat; leave the rest to George. O'd! save us! if all men that an't so good as they should be, were to be kicked into the streets to starve, I don't, for my part, know what would become of the best of us; the more wicked a man is the more time he wants. God knows very well what he is doing, and throws a man a plank, when the
man

man himself thinks he must go to the bottom. Mayhap now I may be one of those planks, and so catch hold of me Sir Guise, and let us jog on. One thing is for certain, you can't be worse off than you are, and you must own you may be a great deal better—Mind that I'll call you—I'll call you—what shall I call you? We must have no more Sir Guises at present. And yet what signifies lying?—I'll call you nothing only say, 'Sir,' and the 'quakering gentleman,' who travelled with me, though 'tis ten to one if we see any body to-night, but a person who can't know you, and her servant-maid who is a new-comer, and who don't know you from our father Adam."

This ambulatory discourse was accompanied by such encouraging tones, that the drooping spirit of our helpless adventurer could not but be cheered, even in the midst of the most cutting humiliations.

"There, Sir, now get over this style, and you are on your own—no I beg pardon—on the abbey ground—but we must leave that and turn more to the right—Aye, aye, come out

out Mrs. Luna, as my squire Henry calls you, though he has many more fine names for you, madam Cynthia, miss Phoebe, and the like—He's one of your poet gentlefolks you know, Sir, and so I believe is his lady madam Olivia. Come out then, and we shall see our path plainer. Keep always to the right—Look'e the castle is all to the right. There's the lights about it—blefs its old face! I have not been away but four days, and long to see it again—Look, look, how the lights are moving about the rooms. Don't you see them through the dear brave old windows. That yonder is madam my lady's apartment: And that just over it is a room where—where another of the family sleeps—Heigh ho! hark how the dogs begin to bark!—Don't be afraid, most of them are fast: But if they were all loose they all love me, blefs you; and, therefore, whoever is along with me, that's George's friend, they'll think, poor fools. By the same token don't you remember poor little Fitz? The old castle to my thoughts always looks gay at night-time, just as if 'twere full of luminations.

But what a sad figure the poor old abbey cuts of late years!—see not a farthing candle:—hang it what am I saying?—I'm talking like a fool!—but the sight of home always puts me in such spirits they run away with me.—But do you see a candle through that copse—that's blind Goody Brabson's, one of our madam Olivia's father's old servants, past work now. So lives easy in one of madam's cottages; the squire and she have a round dozen often there altogether, six for men, they are squire Henry's, and three for women, those are madam's—with a servant a piece to 'tend them, and a spare bed for a friend—Pray step on, Sir,—Yes, as I was observing, a spare bed,—for as madam Olivia said to the builder—all my cottagers must have a bed room for a friend: how lucky 'twas I thought of that: Pray, Sir, don't you think God Almighty puts these things in our head just when we want them? For my part I as much believe he put it into my head to take you to Goody Brabson for a night or so, till we could turn about, as if I had heard his voice. It does one's heart
good

good, and 'specially when one lies in bed of a dark night to think you hear God Almighty's voice. I hope you will hear it one time or other. I mean in the way I speak of; not as they say wicked people often do. O! then a clap of thunder must be nothing to it; even though nobody else can hear it!"

CHAPTER X.

SUCH conversation carried them over the flowery meads, and along the moon-light paths of Fitzorton, with the usual expedition of True George, who bore the half-fainting burthen of the passive Sir Guise at his skirts; and they soon arrived at the little neighbourhood of cottages, which were amongst the many good works of Henry and Olivia, to employ their fortune and their time since their union. That these cottages might be under the immediate eye of their founders, they had been erected only a quarter of a mile distance from the castle, and received, either from their patron or patroness, a smiling visit almost every day.

“ This is Goody Brabson’s, Sir,” whispered George; “ ’twas not her having no eyes, but her having a good old heart, got her here. She was good to some folks when they were burnt—by some folks—out of house and home; and she saved—she saved—somebody’s cat from the flames; and I know who has got a kitten of that cat now. But Lord how I run on! See we have got into Goody’s garden—there’s such a like flippikin of garden as this to all you see—and for that reason its called Eden-place. Eden was one of God’s gardens you know, Sir, when the two people he gave it to were good; and madam never puts any but good people in our Eden. Well, here’s the little door, how sweet the jeffamy and honey suckles smell that grow round it! I know who set some of these with her own pretty hands—Not a soul stirring—all as still as the moon-shine. I told you we should see nobody—step in, step in, they all know me: this little parlour is our plan. Mind hat and wig, that’s all. O! here is Sally the maid—so Sally, where’s Goody? and how does she? here’s

here's a gentleman travelled down with me who an't so well as he should be, and can't go farther to night for fear of getting worse : so I have brought him here to have Goody's spare bed. He can have that, Mr. George ; but Goody is in bed, and she has been in bed these two days. Madam and the squire have been here to see her but now, and were to send something which I expect every minute."

" Poor Goody, I hope she'll be better to-morrow," said George. " I must go home now with my orders : but I'll be here betimes in the morning."

This whispering dialogue was held in the passage, and Sally was just desiring the stranger to step into the parlour while she aired a pair of sheets, as the latch of the house door was lifted up, and in came two persons who brought their well-come in their hands ; for each bore a basket of the good things of this world. As Sally advanced with the light to meet them, the one proved to be a fellow-servant of True George's, and the other the object of his first and last pure affection, Jenny Atwood.

“ O! my good gracious!” exclaimed the latter, resigning her share of the pleasing burthen to Sally, “ how glad I am to see you come back!” which asseveration was confirmed by her throwing out both her hands to George, who, on his part, was hurried out of all things else—indeed out of himself; by that assurance, and the sudden sight of the sole object of his heart. “ But how is it you did not come first to the castle: what does this mean, hey, Mrs. Sally?” questioned Jane, smiling; “ perhaps you can answer me that question—yes, yes, I see how it is: Mr. George likes a cottage better than a castle.”

This playfulness, which sincere and unexpected satisfaction called forth, was soon checked by sympathizing enquiries after Goody Brabson, for whom, she said, the lady Olivia had sent a little of every good, and would herself repeat her visit in the morning.

All this time George was drawing Jane and her companion nearer the door. “ Well, then,” said he, “ we had better make the
best

best of our way home now, as I have orders to deliver from Mr. Sir John.—Hope squire Henry and my lady are well, Jenny?”—“Charmingly,” said the latter, “thank heaven!—well and happy.—“God keep them so!” answered George—by this time in the garden, Sally following with the light.—Good-nights were now plentifully exchanged; and after George had desired Sally to remember what he had said to her, and to make things as comfortable as she could for the sick,—pronouncing the last words very emphatically—he set off with the two messengers of bounty for the castle.

The beams of the moon have seldom shone on three worthier persons; for the servant who made the third, was one who had, from his earliest youth, lived in the family of the Clares, and had been amongst the most select of those who had been transferred to the castle for his good behaviour, on which account there had long subsisted a friendship betwixt him and True George.

When our loving trio, therefore, had gained the step-ladder kind of style, that led

by a back way to the castle, "Do you know," said George, "that the first thing I did when I got within sight of our house was to give a look at your chamber window, Mrs. Jane; and I could not help saying to—a—a—person that was with me—"A person?" questioned Jane, "you had company then,—one of the neighbours I suppose,"—"no—no—yet 'twas a neighbour too—that is."—"Hoity toity!" cried Jenny, resuming her sportive suspicion, "why you seem in a flurry, George—If poor Goody Brabson had not been sick in bed, I should have thought that pretty Mrs. Sally had taken a moon shiny walk to meet you."—George laughed: "Aye, you may laugh, Mr. George," observed the fellow-servant, "but lads, even though they have been in London, like a pretty country lass by the light of the moon, as the song says, specially when they are new faces. But I can tell you friend George, if you go moon-lighting to Goody Brabson's Sally, you'll stray upon my grounds."—"O, ho! is that the case," said George, repeating his laugh.

These

These little rebounds of jocularity, which were rare indeed with Jane Atwood, but which were excited by returning health, somewhat better spirits, the benevolence of her late errand, the unexpected sight of her preserver, and the continuance of comfort at the castle, which they were now approaching. Henry and Olivia Fitzorton, attracted by the mild beauty of the evening, and yet more by the ardour of their generous hearts, had walked forth arm in arm to meet the messengers of their loving kindness.

Scarcely had the enquiries, respecting the health of Goody Brabson, been made, and answered, when a discovery of their-favourite domestic—whose return they did not expect for some weeks, as he had been lent to their brother John for a month—brought on interrogatories seven-fold. These, also, being answered with only a little mental reservation in George, touching his delay—which was set down by the querists to the account of love, though the reader knows it proceeded from a less selfish nature—the whole party went satisfied into the house: Henry and Olivia

to peruse the despatches John had sent them, and the fellow-servants to regale themselves in Jane's sitting-room.

CHAPTER XI.

How far the wretched object of our good Samaritan's bounty was capable of enjoying the comforts, thus procured, may be easily conjectured, as well as with what emotion he must have arisen at the return of day. He beheld from the chamber window of the widow woman, that mansion, the very path to which had, by one atrocity or another, been formerly watered with the tears of his victims, and the mansion itself converted into a house of mourning. Nor did the misery of these sensations yield to those which must scourge his heart at the prospect of his own ruins. Goody Brabson occupying a corner-house of the building, her spare bed-room had a remote view of the abbey, particularly of those invidious screens of clay, and blank walls, which abject malice had reared, as has been noticed in the early part of this history,

to destroy the prospect of the worthy dwellers of the castle. This memorial of his miserable mind had been left either from neglect or inattention, even since part of the premises had undergone the benevolent and reforming hand of the excellent Olivia; and the sight of it brought thus morally under his eye, struck him as a monument which his own hand had erected to the discredit of his unmanly character. But, perhaps, the acutest smart he had yet felt from the sting of adversity, was the sight of the innocent girl he had attempted to destroy in return for the pure virgin heart she gave him: to see her too recovered from his snare, and likely to give happiness to the very man on whose charity her betrayer was thrown for bread.

But while the prospects of Sir Guise were thus dark and cloudy, those of the compassionate youth, who had taken pity on him, were scarcely less perplexed and involved: His night was not less interrupted than that of Sir Guise, though from far different causes; and while his ruminating head yet pressed his pillow, what, after all, he should do with the

man to whom he had been induced, by resistless circumstances, to promise protection? was the great question. To mention him to any persons of the parish, as a proper object of their bounty, would, he knew, be madness; to discover him to Henry Fitzorton would be, perhaps, to revive images which it had been the labour of years to keep under: to breathe an accent that should possess Jane Atwood with the secret, would be wild and rash: yet, some active measure must be pursued, and that without delay.—“He cannot remain where he is now,” said George, “more than a few hours.” He remembered that Olivia had promised Goody Brabson a morning visit.—He knew, besides, that the former was an early riser, while autumn had a flower to bestow towards the making up her Henry’s breakfast bouquet—a custom she had never forsaken, when health and the season permitted, since the exchange of the flowers of Henry’s fancy, for those of the garden, on the memorable anniversary of her birth.

All these considerations drove George from his bed at the dawn of day, by which he
gained

gained nothing more than the being in readiness to follow up any favourable plan that might offer itself to his revolving mind.—“The worst of it is that I could not,” said he, “have picked up and brought home any man but this in all the world, whom our family would not have been willing to keep out of trouble: but for Sir Guise Stuart!—I don’t know a soul—except, indeed, one who must not know of it—who would not as soon see almost the devil—God forgive me!—in their house as he.—Heigho! I don’t know what’s to be done with him, that’s the truth of it. And yet one man should not let another man starve, or drive him on to more wickedness neither. There is something shocking in that.”

Here succeeded a cogitating fit of another hour, when the castle clock striking seven, startled him for the condition of Sir Guise, who would think himself neglected, and, perhaps, be thrown into despair. “O! what *shall* I do with him? where shall I hide this poor miserable sinner? Money I could give, and food I could buy, but a house

—What *shall* I do for a house to put his head in?"

As he asked himself this last question he had sat down at his window, from whence he observed Olivia already in the garden. It was her custom on a beautiful morning, such as then it was, to glide from her apartment without disturbing any body; for the comfort of her whole household—in all which that word of the greatest importance in family arrangements, was the point which both she and her husband desired to gain—and is, indeed, one of the most rare to be seen in the annals of domestic life—namely, SUPERIORITY OF STATION, but EQUALITY in HAPPINESS.

CHAPTER XII.

AFTER Olivia had taken two or three turns up and down the shrubbery nearest the house, and had marked the fragrant objects of her morning-offering, she struck into the path that led to her cottages. George no sooner perceived this, than he left his room, pursued her steps with incredible speed, and having overtaken her, followed the impulse of the moment, and with fainting eagerness addressed her thus. "God knows, my lady, whether I have done right or done wrong."—"Right, I dare say, my good fellow," answered Olivia, a little startled: "but what is the matter?" "Right or wrong, my lady, it can't be helpt now; I have met with one of my dear master the Squire's enemies, and your ladyship's enemy, and Mr. Sir John's enemy,—my enemy,—Jane Atwood's enemy, and I believe every body's enemy upon earth:—but I met him, my lady, unawares,—the sight of him took away my breath, almost my senses,—and scarcely knowing what
I said

I said or did, I,—I,”—“Heaven’s what!” demanded Olivia, “what did you do? not murder him, I hope?” “No, my lady, not murder him: though that I suppose, is what a true servant ought to have done;—instead of which, I never touched a hair of his head, but contrary-wise, as I found he was just at death’s door, no food to eat, nothing to drink, and no bed to lie on;—all his fortune gone, and his heart ready to break—that, though I knew him to be one of the worst wretches that lives, and told him so twenty times over, I could not bear to leave him as I found him,—and so—pray, pray, my lady, forgive me. I e’en brought him home with me, got him into a bed; I know he had not been in one for several night’s before; and,—do pray, forgive me: upon my soul I could not help it,—I,—I,—I have him on the premises at this moment.”

“Thank God, and thank you, my good George for it!—but who can you mean?—I have no notion of any of the persons you have mentioned having an enemy upon earth.”

“Except

“Except him, my lady, or his gang, I don’t think they have: but, for all that, as I said before, I have brought him among us, and used him as if he was a friend.”

“Well then, such treatment will, I hope, make him one: but you observed, he was found in a distressful condition, and it could not be wrong to afford him your pity. I will justify you by adding mine.”

“If he had been the devil, my lady, and I had heard such sighs and groans as I did, I should have done as I have. Not that I want to make him a burden to any body. ’Twas I brought him, and I’ll take care of him. I only want a little house-room somewhere at hand, and nobody to know of it, my lady.”

After this exordium, George related, according to his manner, every circumstance of the case, from his first meeting with Sir Guise in the stage-coach, to the introduction of him at Goody Brabson’s, with the contingent adventures of encountering Jane Atwood.

“Therefore, do pray, my lady, excuse my boldness in taking such a kind of a person into your Eden; you may think it is as bad

as

as the devil thrusting himself in Eden of old: but God help us, my lady! if all wicked sinners were to be hunted from one place to another, and then were to be left to roam about the world, why they would run at us like mad bulls for want of a resting-place, and something to eat—for ‘hunger will break through stone walls:’—no, no, much better to my thoughts, give them wherewithal to lay their head, and a little victuals to eat: and as they are not fit for better company, let them sway themselves; and though to be sure, my lady, you can’t, as the saying is, make a filken-purse out of a sow’s-ear: yet, if by a little kindness, under God’s assistance, we could get but some of the devil out Sir Guise before he gives up the ghost, why that would be no small matter. You know, some folk who were once a little out of the right path have come into it again. You and I, my lady, know somebody who is now a pattern for any lady in the land to cut out by; heigho!—and though this wicked, abandoned sinner, whom, I cannot tell you half what I think of, never can be fit to touch the
hem

hem of that somebody's garment,—you know who I mean, my lady—he may take up a little, and a christian should try to do good, or else what signifies their being christians: and we are bid every funday, your ladyship knows, ‘to raise up them that fall.’ God knows Sir Guise is fallen low enough. O do, do then, my lady, let you and I try to raise old Sir Guise up without a foul being the wiser; for after all is said and done, God knows what help the best of us may want before we go out of the world.”

Olivia chilled and glowed at various passages in our child of nature's account, and at the comments his simple and upright heart made on it; and although she did not know all the dark and deadly offences of Sir Guise, she knew more than sufficient to engrave his name even on her forgiving heart, in characters never to be erased. Abhorrence of the sin, but by no means to the exclusion of pity for the sinner. She therefore assured George that she so entirely approved of all he had done, not only in regard to the relief he had offered, but in the secrecy of it, that she should

should readily join him in all his worthy endeavours. "The only matter," observed she, "that will diminish our satisfactions, is the impossibility of calling in on my part, my beloved Henry, or the amiable Jane on yours; as, though I am convinced they would both assist, and take delight in a benevolence of this kind; you are sensible there are reasons why we must at present, refuse ourselves and them this satisfaction, to see the father of his dear Charles Stuart, and of my Caroline, degraded and reduced, would shock too much my dear husband's gentle nature: and, alas! you know, though blessed be God, in general much restored, he has not strength to bear surprizes of any sort."

"As to that," interrupted George, "I know, my lady, that only the thought of what this wicked creature may one of these days come to, has often been too much for Mrs. Jane, and if she should know that day was come already, and that he was but the day before yesterday without a bit of bread in the world, or a bed to lie on, and now on these premises, I should fear worse would come

come of it than even what happened in the wood. Do you know, my lady, if it had not been for staying on my errand, I should have taken him back to London, where I first met with him in this miserable way, and put him out to board and nurse, just as one would a baby; but thinks I, what is to be done with my orders from Mr. Sir John? they may or may not be of consequence: that is nothing to a servant: an order is an order. It an't his business to stop, and if he is sent sometimes on a fool's errand, that is nothing to him, he is not the fool. Had it not been for this, can any body go to think I would have let him come here, betwixt two fires, as a body may say, the abbey and the castle? I am sure when Jane came in with your ladyship's comforts for Goody—lord love your heart! though I am always so glad, I could cry like a child to see the face, or to hear the pretty voice of Jane Atwood—don't you always think she has a nice way of speaking, my lady?—I was frightened almost out of my wits, lest she should find out the make-believe sick quaker, for all his brown wig and
flouched

flouched hat: though to be sure, as I told your ladyship, I could never have hit them off myself if they had been on: no, not if I had been a year in his company, which, God forbid I ever should be; for if he could have gone about the world without falling into the clutches of some of his own gang, even though he had not a farthing in the world, don't think, my lady, I would have brought him even within fifty miles of either the castle or the abbey!—no, my lady, I would have given him what money I had to spare, and kicked him out of my company as I would a football, or a nuisance, or what not.”

“My good George,” exclaimed Olivia, “your mention of the abbey has put a thought into my head, about a place for this poor wretch: you know the abbey is now ours on lease, and though Henry and I have made a point of delicacy and feeling, not to go into it, and as seldom as possible to walk near it; which could only revive the thoughts of its former state, when graced by Caroline and Charles; and though I have ever locked up the key to keep it out of the sight

of

of the friends who loved those dear unhappy wanderers, whom my continual researches could never find; there were sent, you remember, some few beds and other general conveniences into the upper part of the building, by way of temporary hospital when the small-pox raged so cruelly in ours and some neighbouring parishes; and the particular apartments which were fitted up for our apothecary, the worthy Mr. Burton, whom we engaged to inoculate as many as friends or parents chose to send, were directed to be proper for the reception of a gentleman. I have an hundred times had it in my mind to order this furniture to be turned to some use, had not the dread that attaches to every idea of the unfortunate abbey, made me lay aside the thought, but I shall now be very glad if you imagine they might answer our present purpose: for it will be easy to get one of the cottagers who does not know Sir Guise, to attend him. I only mean this for a short time, till we can think and consult each other about a less exposed situation. My only fear is, that the dreadful change he will find in

every thing from the day, alas ! when a good and dutiful family surrounded him, may grievously oppress his heart : yours and mine it would break in a moment ; nevertheless, if we are the authors of our miseries and disgraces, we must try to bear them. The matter is, will this temporary abode do ?”

“Do, please my lady,” ejaculated George, who had been shaving off the excesses of his eager nature upon his nails, buttons, and neckcloth, and twitching every thing in his way, since the idea was started. “Do, my lady ! yes, it will do wonders ! let me have the key—let me have the key ; I’ll abbeey him, tofs up his bed, boil his kettle, throw him on a faggot, open a sash or two, give him the bible and testament, lock him up again, put the key in my pocket, and so feed him and leave him, and leave him and feed him, just as I would an old fox, or a sick kite, or any other wild wicked thing I had picked up, and did not like to knock on the head. As to his finding a great change, that is what he should do : for if he were to be made as gay and great as he was before, I

should fear he would get to his old pranks again. No! no! I'll tell him to bless God and your ladyship it is no worse, and then if he growls, I'll say, mend yourself wherever you can, for God knows you want mending bad enough; and even if he should be seen, as I'll always take care to leave him wigged and hatted, quaker-fashion; why should he not pass for a sad, sick, sorry, poor man, who has as much occasion for an hospital as another? I am sure there will be no story in all that."

Long before our benevolent domestic had got to the end of his speech, Olivia had turned her light steps towards the castle: George pursuing her track and his remarks, which latter finished just as the walkers had gained the spacious stone entrance into the great hall. There, desiring George to wait a few moments, Olivia ascended the lofty stair-case that led to the upper apartments. Those few moments were employed by the Hermes-footed George to collect the history of the morning; he heard that Henry had not yet come down; he saw that Jane

Atwood

Atwood was pleasingly busied in the nursery with Olivia's children; her own little one, of unfortunate memory, was, perhaps, luckily, among the victims to the ravages of the very disorder which occasioned the converting part of the abbey into an hospital, that was now to become a charity-house.

He got back into the hall just as his lady was coming down stairs, and, smilingly delivering what she went for, wrapt up loosely in a paper, she begged he would remember her name was not to be on any account mentioned to the quaker, but whenever necessary to be consulted, she would be ready. "And now," said she, "I must go make up my flowery tribute for the best and dearest of men." "And I," said George—reflecting a playful air and sentiment from his mistress, "must go and put out of sight my bundle of weeds: for I think—an' please you, my lady—so we may call our sham-quaker, whom, to my thoughts, is just as bad as Squire Henry is good."

"Pray tell Goody Brabson," said Olivia, as she and George were separating, "I will
call

call on her after breakfast, and indeed this fair morning, I mean to make the tour of Eden's buildings, and pay a how-do-ye visit to all my dear cottagers. I hope," added she, "my husband and our children will accompany me. My Henry looks so very happy when we are on these strolls, and I wish to make the little ones as like their father as possible. Adieu, George. I shall keep Henry and Jane Atwood to myself, at least for an hour to come, so you will have time to put your stray sheep into the fold."

The smile with which the speaker accompanied this, just as she took her way again into the flower-gardens, and the tear which the hearer dropped in her path, are two of the many things in this world to be felt, and not described. We can only offer it as our firm belief, that as the one was sweeter than the fairest of the flowers Olivia Fitzorton could hope to cull; the other was softer than the dews that wait upon and increase their fragrance.

CHAPTER XIII.

SIR Guise Stuart, meanwhile, a prisoner in the chamber, was literally a partaker of the widow's mite, which indeed like her's of sacred story, was supplied by a source that would never suffer her cruse of oil to waste, nor her morsel to fail. He had for some hours experienced all the horrors of suspense and apprehension, superadded to the misery of surrounding prospects, and the severe reviews of his own mind upon them. He had seen from the western window of his apartment True George, and Olivia Fitzorton, the wife of the man who had so many reasons to execrate his tyranny. They were in earnest conversation, walking backwards and forwards, with what, to his sickly fancy, appeared angry and plotting steps; and having no rule to judge by in the measure of generous actions, he did not doubt but that he was to be given up to the malignant triumph of a family, whose honest disdain he had so often experienced; and he now rebuked his own credulity for
having

Having thus suffered himself to be trepanned into the custody, of even more powerful enemies than his wife and her associates.

In the midst of these injurious contemplations, True George, coming in with a basket under his arm, changed their direction from the persons accused to the illiberal accuser: and yet there were some gleams of returning grace in the latter, observing, "I am afraid, Mr. George, I have wronged you." "O yes," replied George, "that you have Sir Guise, and every body else in our family often enough, but that is nothing; good for evil, you know, is best: so if you wish to have a snug birth in your own house that was, and there live quiet, and be seen only by me, till we find what can be done, and how matters turn, why you will come along with me;—hat and wig close tho', or we shall have all the parish about your ears, and about mine too, for bringing you amongst them. Nay, now don't stand thinking about it: needs must, you know, Sir Guise, when the devil drives, and I'm sure he is driving you hard enough: and now if I can but put you in the way of

preventing his carrying you clear off to the other world, and there casting you into a much worse place than I am going to take you to, why I think I shall have done a pretty tight job. But it gets late, and I must house you before people are abroad. If you should once be seen it will be all over with us."

Independently of other reasons, this latter suggestion was all-sufficient to quicken the Baronet. He repaired his disguise, while George went down with the lady Olivia's message to Goody Brabson; who, in answer to kind enquiries, said, she was much recovered; and in a very few minutes after, Sir Guise Stuart, once possessor of the rich domain through which he was now to pass, set forward under the patronage of a servant, and that the servant of a man he had irreparably injured, for the mansion which, in two successive periods of his life, had been the seat of his tyranny and of his disgrace, and was now to be his refuge from penury and despair.

These last evils, however, the commiserating George, notwithstanding, at some moments,

moments, his honest indignation at the remembrance of past vice got the better of his pity for present wretchedness, did all he could to blunt the edge of. On the way, he explained to Sir Guise as much as he could, without committing Olivia, the arrangement which had been made for his uninterrupted security, and for his support. George acquainted him, that though he must consent for the sake of his being safe, to be his sole and absolute prisoner; yet, that by the time he had amused himself with what he had brought in that basket, he would be forth coming again.

"In a few days, the weather will, I suppose," cried George, "make us look about us for a good fire, and that you shall not want. You will be lonely to be sure: but then that is better than wicked company, and you know you could not have even that now, if you had all the world before you: so that, in the main, you are, to my thoughts, better here than any where else: so try, Sir Guise, to make it sit easy, and as I have a hundred things to call me away, I wish you good

thoughts till I see you again; but I must not forget to tell you I have put a good book or two in the basket."

Notwithstanding all these alleviations, and the comfort to be derived from a comparison of the present with the past, the situation of Sir Guise was truly forlorn. He eluded, it is true, the haunts of his robber-wife, and of all her loose companions; the wiles of the bailiff were no longer to be dreaded, the day no more exhausted in wandering, or the night spent in the public streets, or in commixture with those who infest them; the apprehension of famine, and the terror of meeting in every face a foe, were also at an end; all these he had escaped, but his seclusion from the species, offered him full leisure to become acquainted with himself.

In the dusk of the evening, George paid his prisoner a second visit, and mentioned more particularly the plan of his establishment. Being in a hurry, however, he said little of the internal furniture of the abbey, except to observe, that though Sir Guise would, doubtless, find great alterations in it, the whole

whole range of it would be at his command, and what it might want in other respects would be made up in perfect security. "You are safe," observed George, "not only because I shall always have the key of you in my pocket, but because you must know there is not a man, woman, or child, in the three parishes, who could be persuaded to put their heads into this house besides myself, even if the doors were left wide open: for the story goes, that the house is haunted by the troubled spirit of your dead lady, who comes from the little chapel where she is buried, and walks all over the rooms every night, and has been seen go in from the tower at the top, and so get down one of the chimneys; though as to that, they can as easily fly in at a key hole, as if the sash was left up on purpose,—but that's nothing;—you would not be afraid of your dead wife, if you were to see her; she never did you any harm when she were living in this very abbey; and I dare say, if she might be permitted, for I am told, sir, apparitions have their orders, and may not do always what they

like—she would, if she were here this moment, rather pity and moan over you, and do something to shew you she forgave you, and wished you well, than to hurt or frighten you. “See, sir,” continued George, “I have brought you some candles, and a tinder-box: we will have a light in a minute;—aye, and I have a bottle of wine for you, as good as any in Fitzorton cellar: and here’s a pair of sheets for your bed, as fine as my lady herself lies on. I can tell you, I’ve had a good look out to bring them off without being seen. There—we’ve got a light, you see: but the wind does so scud about these old apartments, there is no keeping in a candle. I think it feels dampish too. To morrow I’ll get in some wood, and you can have a fire; ’tis a blustering night, is not it, sir? but what is this to the nights you have made Squire Henry and I pass in the woods about this estate! Bad as you may think the room where you are, I’d have given ten year’s wages to have got my poor master into it, instead of which, there has he stood for hours in the middle of the night, in hail, rain, or snow,

snaw, to look at the place where his heart's first love was. O, Sir Guise ! Sir Guise ! Sir Guise !—but we must not think of these things ; he is very happy now, but where is she, poor thing !—O, Sir Guise ! Sir Guise ! well, I'll say no more. You look sadly pale, do take a glass of wine, it will chear you up a-bit ; there, sir,—and look'e, here are sweet biscuits : O, if you knew who made them ! and a cold fowl, and a neat's-tongue, and in short, a little of every thing : and a nice clean cloth too. I'll make you up a supper in a minute, and you may either eat it while I go put the sheets on the bed, or you may take it after I am gone."

" Stay as long as you can, George," sighed the Baronet, " I will, sir," replied George, " and am sorry I can't be oftner with you, or longer at a time ; for indeed, Sir Guise, I am very sorry to see you in this way, and to leave you in it all to yourself : I could hardly keep from crying as I went away from you in the morning ; after all, said I, it must go very hard with a gentleman who has lived as he has lived, and had once a house full of good
F 5 people

people about him, to come to this !—but I'll get a good bed ready, that is always a comfort to a man ; have you found one that suits you, sir ?”

“ No,” answered Sir Guise dejectedly, “ I have scarcely stirred from this room since you left me.”

“ There's a good one somewhere I am told, and I'll find him out as soon as I've lighted another candle. But you have not yet drank the wine I poured out, do pray, sir. There—I know it will do you good, for it is Madeira, and older than I am :—so, now for the bed.”

The different movements of Sir Guise's soul during this discourse, and the reflections that preceded and followed it, had so destroyed every bodily consideration, that the unhappy man sat abstracted from all thoughts of sustenance, though for many days past, he had not been composed enough to enjoy one comfortable meal. On George's return, he saw, for the first time, the cheeks of Sir Guise Stuart bathed in a torrent of tears. His worthy attendant—forgetting that

the object of his care had ever offended either God or man—felt his pure heart shake within him at the sight, and as he gazed on the quivering lip, streaming eye, and diminished figure of the Baronet, “O, good dear sir,” he cried, “don’t be cast down, don’t be disheartened, pray, pray, don’t. God is very merciful, and bringeth light out of darkness; only look in that book, sir, I brought you this morning, particularly where he says that, ‘he desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live!’ and moreover that, ‘the sinner who repents, is better than ninety and nine persons who have never been guilty.’ How comfortable that is! Would to heaven, good father Arthur were here now!”

“Have you found any bed?” questioned Sir Guise, “I do not feel very well.”

“I am afraid, sir, you are very ill; but, with the blessing of God, I hope you will be better to-morrow; perhaps you would like to get into bed before I go, sir.”

"If you please," answered Sir Guise, rising with difficulty.

"Take my arm, Sir; but pray one more glass of wine—at any rate we'll take the bottle with us—you may wish for a little in the night. I have got you a decanter of nice water fresh from your own pump; and made out things as well as I could. All this is woman's work you know, Sir. I am but an awkward chamber-man—But I'll do the best I can, I will indeed; and will help you to pray to God, with all my soul, to make you better every way."

George had, in the course of this speech, and the intermediate pauses which he made, conducted, or rather carried Sir Guise through many apartments to that where he had prepared the bed, being the room fitted up for Mr. Burton at the time of the inoculation, and which Olivia had mentioned. At the moment of entrance Sir Guise drew back.—
"I wish you had not happened to fix on this chamber," said he.

"None of the others have so good a bed," replied George.

"I should

“ I should have preferred them nevertheless,” said Sir Guise in broken accents—“ but ’tis no matter.”

George retired till the Baronet got into bed ; then asked Sir Guise if he could do any thing more for him ? assuring him that he would remain with him all night, but that it would be noticed at the castle, and spoil all. He then desired to know whether he chose to have the candle left burning, or be put out. “ O, put it out,” answered Sir Guise, “ I can change my room to-morrow.

“ I will put the sheets on another bed if you think you shall sleep more comfortably. I think nothing of the trouble,” said George.

“ It does not matter for to-night,” answered Sir Guise, “ perhaps it is better as it is.”

“ Then good rest to you, Sir ; and may God hear your prayers, as I hope he will mine. Your name will be in all of them, I do assure you, Sir.”

The good creature drew the curtain, repeating his greeting, but did not leave the chamber, or the house, till he had put all things in order—so that in case Sir Guise
should

should rise before he could return in the morning, he might not want any accommodation the situation and circumstances afforded.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE apartment hinted at by Sir Guise, was that in which he had first received the blooming form, and last observed the pallid corpse of lady Stuart his wife, and to which the bed and furniture, he had seen at Robert Irwin's formerly appertained; and it was the impression made by this latter circumstance, associated with other affecting ideas, which produced his reluctance to sleep there.

A thousand promiscuous and polluting scenes might have passed in that apartment since; when the sons and daughters of dissipation held their midnight revels at the abbey; but confederate guilt derives confidence from example, imitation, and numbers: the terrors of the individual are silenced or put to flight by general audacity: far removed from these, Sir Guise Stuart was

now

now thrown upon himself. In the abode of his former enormities he was left to pass the night where dreadful sights had been seen, and tremendous sighs had been heard—even in that chamber where all that was lovely, and interesting in life, had felt his cruel arm, encountered his furious eye, and assailed his un pitying ear.

Such is the sympathy of painful as of pleasing ideas, that with these seemed to assemble in the mind of Sir Guise, a thousand others not less afflicting. Memory brought forward, in terrible array, the most oppressive images of his atrocious hypocrisy : and the different, yet dire events of the little chapel of the inn at Adsell, of Edgecombe-hall, and of the Atwoods, came hurrying into the retrospect—at once the figures of all those whom he had wronged—a numerous band—poured upon his affrighted fancy. The wind had arisen, and howled with more than usual violence through the almost empty apartments. Sir Guise regretted that the candle had been extinguished. Heavy pauses of death-like silence were succeeded by vehement bursts of the hurricane,

in

in which the loosened tiles fell into the areas, the casements rattled, and some of the doors flapped to and fro amidst the chaos of sounds. He imagined he could distinguish human voices at one moment loud, and menacing, at another in moaning and whispered complainings. To these his fears, his fancy, and his conscience, gave appropriate persons. It was now the faltering accent of the dying Matilda; then of the injured Sir Armine; now the groans of Charles; and then again the swoonings of Caroline. Exhausted by continued exertion he sunk into a momentary doze, out of which he seemed to be aroused by a legion of furies that bore to his distempered mind the shapes of Valentine Miles and his colleagues, led on by the furious lady Tempest. In the midst of a conflicting struggle with these, he thought he distinctly heard footsteps pacing along an adjoining apartment. Unable to support the shock of this idea he leaped from his bed, and opening a door, that led from the found, he ran through the rooms which lay in the eastern direction of the abbey, where stop-
ping

ping awhile, and every noise seeming to cease, he sought about for something whereon to repose. After traversing the place in vain several minutes, he perceived he had got into a part of the abbey which had always been left unfurnished; but he at last found a seat which projected from the window, and sat down. The wind had much abated, and a heavy shower of rain falling soon after sank it to a perfect calm—all was still without, and a dreary silence prevailed within. Encouraged by this, he was rising from his seat, in the hope of returning to his bed, when the noises suddenly were renewed, and to his infinite terror he heard one of the antique folding-doors, of a spacious apartment beneath, open and close. Sinking down again on the bench with affright, he observed from the window, which commanded a view of several of the rooms in the second story, a light moving from room to room with a strange celerity that chilled his blood. Such was its speed that, like lightning, it caught his eye only by flashes. Sir Guise left the room, and, without knowing what path to take

take, ran forward by hazard rather than design; but turning to the left, he recovered the suite of rooms from which he had wandered. Making a trembling pause, in one of these, he heard a voice reverberate in hollow echoes one unvaried kind of cry. On lifting his eye to the window, he perceived the same light going as it were before the voice. The light vanished, the voice continued—in a short time the sounds came evidently nearer, and in their advance rendered them not more loud than distinct: Sir Guise soon heard his own name pronounced, and repeated with a violence that denoted at once misery and despair. A heart more intrepid, and less criminal, than that of our recluse, might have quaked at this—a noise, as of one running distractedly forward, accompanied the voice—the door of the apartment where Sir Guise stood, supporting himself by one of the pillows of the chimney, opened abruptly, and the figure of a man, bearing a light, rushed in, still repeating the name of Sir Guise Stuart.

CHAPTER XV.

THESE terrors, which certainly wanted not the power of guilt to render them more terrible, proceeded only from True George, who, on reaching the castle, had an unobserved opportunity to inform Olivia of the manner in which he had placed, served, and left their mutual charge.—“ Yet I don’t think, my lady, the poor man will get any sleep, there does not seem a wink in his eyes, nor indeed any thing else but tears.”—Olivia expressed a wish, that before George had gone off with his basket, she had thought to have put into it a cordial, which had proved of such use to her beloved Henry whenever he suffered for want of sleep. “ I am sure it would have procured him a good night’s rest, which, in any misery you know, my good George, is a balm from heaven.”—“ It is too late now,” continued Olivia, “ to-morrow morning, my good George, you shall take it to him.”—“ I am sorry your ladyship thinks it is too late, for I don’t; and when the squire is

is gone to bed if you please, my lady, to give the good stuff to me, and tell me how much our poor quaker should have at a dose, I'll step with it to the abbey; and if I should find him asleep, as I shall not make much noise, why I'll leave him as I found him, and it will be ready for another time."

"But you stand in need of rest yourself, my poor fellow," said Olivia.

"I do so," answered George, "but to my thoughts I ought never to wake again if I were wicked enough to go to bed till I had carried a poor sinful soul, locked up by himself in a huge house, like a deserted town, something to give him strength to go on praying God to make him better."

Olivia gave him the cordial with due directions, and George set out just as the shower began to fall, for a second nocturnal excursion to the abbey. On his arrival he unlocked the great door, and opened every other with the greatest caution, passing with stealing steps through the several long apartments, till he reached that in which he had left the Baronet: but his consternation at finding it empty,

empty, aggravating his fears, brought to his mind the condition in which he had parted from his prisoner, especially the regret he had expressed at sleeping in that apartment, and made him adopt some of the superstitious, and horrible things supposed now to infest the abbey. He ran through every room in the castle, lantern in hand, till he found what he sought in the manner, and condition we have recorded.

Long and reiterated, however, were the efforts of the protector of Sir Guise, before the latter could be restored to sense or motion; and it was lucky that the gentle, and considerate Olivia had added a smelling bottle of restoratives to the cordial. By the application of the former the wretched man sufficiently recovered to distinguish the person who assisted him; and this producing confidence, he was, in due time, able to be conducted back to his bed, by the side of which George sat, and having diminished fear by gradual explanation, his charge was at once composed and grateful. "Now then, your Honour, for a little of this good stuff, which a good friend of mine
—I beg

—I beg your pardon—a person of my acquaintance, who would not hurt a worm—gave me, and which will make you sleep like a top, and so it ought, seeing the time my bringing it has kept you awake.”

George mixed up the cordial-draught, according to rule and measure, in half a glass of the Madeira; and after Sir Guise had taken it, our good domestic seated himself by the bed-side to watch its operation.—“I hope there will be no more noises, Mr. George,” said the Baronet faintly—“as to noises, I’ll tell you what, I never believed in these sort of things in my life, till I came and saw you had left your warm bed, which, in the condition you were, I thought nothing but the devil himself could have persuaded you to do—and I own when I could neither see nor hear any thing of you above or below, I began to imagine you were really carried off; and considering all things, one could not have wondered at it if you had. But now I have found you again, I come back to my old thoughts, that, there are no candles going about without hands of flesh and blood

to carry them, and no noises by day or night, but what are made by poor mortals, like you or I. A man's conscience, to be sure, will conjure up these things, and a person had better be haunted by a whole church-yard of glarish spectres, as squire Henry called them—yea, though there were to come one or more out of every grave, than be haunted by that:—Now don't you think so?"

"I do indeed," answered Sir Guise, pathetically.

"And, therefore, Sir," resumed George, "never mind any other lights or noises."

"I think," sighed Sir Guise, "I need not trouble you any longer, at present, as I feel heavy, and might, perhaps, sleep if I were alone."

"There then, Sir, is the smelling bottle on the chair just by you: day is almost at hand, so a candle will be of no use—I'll leave it, however, in the chimney i' the next room. I hope I shall find you fast when I come again, but I'll not wake you; for to my thoughts 'tis one of the sins to wake any body—Sleep is such a nice soft comfortable thing.

thing. Good morning, Sir, for 'tis long enough past twelve."

George now again withdrew, but waited in an adjacent room till he had manifest tokens of Sir Guise being in profound slumber. The good youth, at length, went home, where he sought his own pillow; and if conscious goodness did not soon after seal his eyes, conscious goodness could alone bestow the happy emotions that might keep them open.

CHAPTER XVI.

OLIVIA'S cordial draught had its full power on the corporal functions of her patient, for it produced an uninterrupted repose of many hours; indeed, of nearly the whole of the day—for the sun was gilding with its setting rays the painted figures of his antique window as he arose from his bed.

But to what did he awake? The never-resting worm was at length feeding on the breast which had long defied its envenomed tooth. The hour was come when he could no more deceive himself or others. Conducted to

the chief scenes of his iniquity,—the only ones, perhaps, in the whole range of the universe where conscience could exert herself on a hardened heart: and stretched incessantly on the rack of conviction, he was by degrees humbled by chastisement to renounce hypocrisy, even while he felt that he had in every other instance been a hypocrite.

Yet all that could be effected by persevering goodness and pity, was done by Olivia Fitzorton and True George; and the forlorn object of their cares had continued under their guardianship some months,—during which no fights were seen or voices heard in the abbey, but those of compassion and good will. Yet the health of Sir Guise declined, and all the symptoms of a diseased mind were noticed in his conduct. He passed suddenly from a violent and tumultuous to a settled malady on the spirits. His intellects were no way impaired. His general melancholy was increased, but his raving paroxysms were less frequent. He roved at intervals over every apartment of the house, and seemed to live most in those which at

his first seclusion were avoided as objects of terror. The bed-chamber of lady Stuart, which had several times been changed for others, became at last his place of constant repose: those of Caroline and Charles were visited by turns; and in one or other of these his guardian George would often discover him bathed in tears.

He was one day found busily employed in fastening up a suite of apartments in the western wing of the abbey, and on being asked the reason, with a brief asperity that might have rather been expected from John Fitzorton, he answered—"because they are accursed! They were my *wicked* wife's:" so he had for some time past called lady Tempest, to distinguish her from lady Matilda Stuart, whom he termed *blest*! But, at length, he moved from the chamber of the former, because, he said, he was unworthy to occupy it.

A report of all these changes was faithfully made by George to Olivia: "But for all this my lady," said George, "the man must die, unless he has some help besides
yours

yours and mine. I can see plainly he wants a doctor; but the worst of it is we can't pass him off to any body of that sort as a quaker, because 'tis not now one time in twenty that I find him either wigged or hatted: He will sit you in the old green silk wrapper which he found, he says, in one of the lumber chests;—and which, he says, was something belonging to his blessed first lady, as he calls her,—and he has got something of a sash or girdle about his waist, that he one day told me he was sure he had seen worn by miss Caroline—so that whoever goes to attend him must know him at once: not by his face neither so much, for that's not like the same; but he talks about himself and his wickedness, and calls himself as great a villain, God knows, as he is! Oh! my lady, if you had heard what he said last night about Jane Atwood:—he said, she was like an angel of light, and he like a fiend of darkness—poor man! I have thought better of him ever since I heard him say so—But for sure, something in the doctoring way he must have, or he'll be gone."

“ You terrify me, George; and why not let the good Mr. Burton go to him? He is honesty itself. In him we may confide, and nobody save himself will know but that it is one of his patients, afflicted with some disorder that requires he should be alone, which is, you know, alas! the truth,—and so has borrowed a room in the abbey to place him within reach:”—“ hey, my lady?” said George—“ Yes, and even if my dear Henry should hear of it, for mine and his children’s sake, if the apothecary observes it may be infectious, he will easily be prevailed upon not to indulge his curiosity, and there it will end.”—“ The very man, my lady! O! what a clever lady you are to think of him! not a soul will know it from Mr. Doctor Burton I am sure. I’ll go to him the first time I can slip out for an hour; ’tis but a step of a few miles—But then, my lady, should we not tell Sir Guise about it? Poor Gentleman, we should take more care than ever now he’s getting good not to throw him back again: Well, I’ll take care of
of

of that. Thank you, thank you, my lady, two heads are always better than one."

The point was soon settled; the worthy apothecary was entrusted, and his patient reconciled to receive his visits; and, indeed, it would not have been easy to have found a third person more fitted to the task of consoling a sick and solitary recluse, than the good Burton. He was, truly, as the reader has seen in the several glances he has had of his manners and character, one of the most assiduous, affectionate, true-hearted beings in the world, full of pity and forgiveness, and by no means unskilful in his business. By his own industry, fostered by his patrons at the castle, he had contrived to bring up his very large family, though but a village apothecary, where, as Jonathan observed, there were few people to be either sick or sorry. Of two-and-twenty children there remained alive fifteen, but of these only the two daughters, and three of their youngest brothers, were on his hands—the rest of the males had been comfortably disposed of by John, Henry, or James Fitzorton—the

G 3

females

females were provided for by Olivia. So that though the apothecary, from long habitude and attachment, remained in the little village where he had first established, and still carried on business with his usual unrelaxed attention, even in the very shop where Jonathan Armstrong, in his masquerade rags and stumps, paid him a visit, he was considered as a man rising above all domestic incumbrances, and laying by little yearly gifts and gettings for his children:—yet with a hand so clean, and a heart so open, that no honest distress within his reach, either of body or of mind, but found an adviser and a friend in Mr. Burton of Brixom. And all this progressive good fortune arose from the very slight beginnings of his interview with the pretended lame beggar, whom he followed to Fitzorton to return a sixpence that was paid by a mistake for the memorable bottle of hartshorn.

Slight, and sometimes too nice for instant observation, are the means which bring about the most important ends; as the proudest rivers may have their source in the humblest vales,

vales, and issue from the scantiest rills. It is true, that before Jonathan's adventure, our friend Burton was, upon principles of general benevolence, included in the bounty list of the castle, as an oppressed and struggling man, to be occasionally assisted; but the *splendid sixpence* brought his heart into action and notice, and, by ascertaining its worth, created an interest for him in every lover of virtue. The drawing of the man had been looked at transiently before, it was then placed in an unfavourable light, but it was this simple sixpence that shifted the picture to a spot where its colours could be seen and be appreciated.

Prior to our apothecary's visiting Sir Guise Stuart, the diligent George had related to him such parts of the history of that unhappy outcast as were necessary to excite his entire commiseration; so that although Burton was amongst those who had conceived the most unqualified detestation of the Baronet's former practises, he was by no means prejudiced beyond the power of penitence to change
G 4 his

his sentiments in the proportion that the offender changed his life.

Although Burton had for some time past been an almost daily visitor at the castle, his being all at once observed to take his ride, or walk, into the proscribed and desolate abbey, excited general enquiry into his motive, but the reason hinted at by Olivia to George, and adopted by the apothecary, was so natural, and, in effect, so true, that the apprehension of any epidemic malady not only prevented the enquirers from asking any more questions, but made the swains, and other persons of the surrounding villages, go to several places by round-about paths rather than cut through the abbey pastures, or come within a mile of its supposed tainted air.— Indeed some thought it not very safe to come into contact with Burton himself, and we know not whether his attendance on this one patient might not lose him many others; for the natural gathering of a story had increased the malignity of the abbey invalid from a putrid fever to the spotted pestilence; and the good folks made it a kind of parish business

business not to send to Burton, if it could possibly be avoided, till he had done with the man that had got the plague.

George, however, was observed to venture in more than once: some blamed his fool hardiness, and some praised his humanity; while others said, if he regarded not his own health, he had no right to hazard that of his neighbours; and the plague, they had understood, was a thing that, like a person charmed, would kill at a touch,—nay, and at a mile distance.

Thus then was the abbey under a double proscription; first, on account of the vices of Sir Guise Stuart; and, secondly, from the diseases of a contagious man—perhaps had the country people known the man was that very Sir Guise Stuart himself, they would have held the mansion in yet greater dread, and have left the county to settle beyond reach of the pest.

Our good apothecary, however, and True George, frequently met at the apartments of the Baronet, and took the active management of his health and comforts

between them; while Olivia, like some recompensing, yet invisible power, superintended their office, and encouraged their zeal. Burton had contrived to fix in the abbey kitchen an old woman, who knew something of cookery, and who undertook to live in some of the rooms below, provided the *plaguy* gentleman would promise not to come near her; and on being solemnly assured by the apothecary that it would be impossible for her to catch it, while she kept out of his way, and attended only to her own business, accepted the office. Nothing, however, could induce her to go near him. True George, therefore, continued the office of gentleman of the bed-chamber, and thus the economy of the household was perfectly well settled.

The object of their cares, however, often wanted more than bed or board, or than all the drugs the *materia medica* could furnish. His mind was struck! his conscience was in arms! and the spirit of the man was departed from him!—yet every cheering, every sustaining art was tried, and sometimes not without success.

Now

Now and then the apothecary would seduce him into a game of back-gammon, and sometimes assist him to take half an hour's exercise in an area of the court yard, that was shaded from observation by the abbey wall. George would occasionally play him a tune on the flute, lead him into momentary sports, tell him a merry tale, and by a thousand ways beguile him from himself. The Baronet would often speak his thanks by a smile, but oftner by a tear. In general, however, he declined motion, though he found it difficult to rest. He would take his solitary rounds of the castle, shift his visits from the room of his Matilda to that of Caroline or Charles. He would pass lady Tempest's door with every mark of scorn, and once ventured with Burton to go into what had been the general breakfasting-room, and from thence into the library; but a sudden thought drove him hastily from both these, and the residue of the day on which he had hazarded this experiment, was unusually melancholy.

CHAPTER XVII.

IT was in that breakfasting-room, the imperious husband, and cruel father, had fallen upon his knees to CURSE the best and most obedient of wives; and it was in that library, he had imposed his hard commands on the most observant and dutiful of daughters. The bell with which he had summoned her into his presence, was amongst the few fixtures that remained, and as he cast his eye upwards to survey it, though the wires were broken, and nothing seemed entire, but the part on which he had pressed his tyrannic hand, it struck his heart with a sound more awful than the knell of death. So acute is the memory of guilt when quickened by conscience.

But an impression more intolerable for him to bear, even than these, though accompanied perhaps, from its profundity, with less actual violence, proceeded from the unexpected sight of Jane Atwood at Goody Brabson's. Attached to this young woman were
so

so many terrible transactions; the delusion of youth! the desertion of age! the lying lips! and the never-consuming fire! the excellency of True George! whose conduct shone forth in the character of a protector, contrasted with his own hateful behaviour as a seducer! Hence a glimpse of the injured Jane, though but momentary, acted upon him as the commissioned lightning acts upon its object, overwhelming the proudest faculties of our nature, and preserving memory only to torture him with partial recollection of his crimes.

He had been under the infliction of feelings like these, some days, when, making his accustomed call, the apothecary perceived he had been writing, and finding him much agitated, "truly, my good sir," said he, feeling his pulse, "this will never do. You can do yourself more harm in a single hour, than I can do you good in a month: and unless you will prescribe a little for yourself——"

"No, sir," replied his patient, with a feeble voice, but earnest manner; "you can, on the contrary, contribute more to the health

health of my body, and peace of my mind, in one hour, than I can in the residue of life."

"Then I am sure, if I can, I will," said the good man ardently, "that is," a little correcting his warmth: "if I imagine what you have to propose will be really for your good, because you know, my good sir, patients are not always the best judges of their own case, nor of the remedies best adapted to their cure."

"But mine can be effected only one way," answered Sir Guise, with augmented emotion. He then took from under his wrapper a written paper, which he read aloud, though in every line it criminated himself. Often did he drop the scalding tear of sharpest remorse upon the pages, and at length he exclaimed, "Oh! if you would ever wish me to remain long enough in this world, to make my peace in another, deliver this as it is addressed. You know the reasons why I cannot ask this favour of Mr. George: for though there are not any sentiments that can interrupt the happiness of that
good

good young man, I have tried, in vain, to mention to him even the name of the injured girl to whom this letter is written : In pity take it, then, and grant my request."

"I will, sir," answered Burton, wiping his eyes and receiving the letter, after the trembling hands of the Baronet had folded it up again, and put under it a wafer. "I expect to see her this very evening : it is her birth day : we are all to meet on it, and drink to her health."

"Are you?" questioned Sir Guise, with quivering lips : "I,—I,—will drink it too; alas ! alas ! Mr. Burton!"

Sir Guise smote his breast, and it was a considerable time before the kind hearted apothecary could compose him. He remained, however, in his pious endeavour till long after the anniversary-festival at the Fitzorton-arms was begun ; he had set apart that evening for gaiety and grateful pleasure amongst his friends and benefactors ; but he could not feel himself in a situation to enjoy society till he had administered to his now interesting solitary, all the comfort in his

power to bestow. What were the pleasant events and discoveries that awaited his heart, as if to reward him for his worthy deeds, previous to his joining the party, the sympathizing reader already knows; and just before the company broke up, he performed his promise, by giving the packet to Jane Atwood: taking care to put it into an envelope, that the hand writing might not immediately be discovered, and as he gave it into her hand, he said, "this is for your own pretty eyes; it is the case of a patient of mine, and a friend of yours, who has long been in a very bad way, and who had been given over: but who, I am in hopes, will do better after all; if you can assist a little in the cure, I am sure you will."

"From some of my lady's cottagers, I suppose," said Jane, putting the packet into her pocket; "I will certainly attend it, Mr. Burton, before I go to bed."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THUS, by a retrospective view, having brought forward some principal figures, which had been a considerable time in the back-ground of this our family-picture, we will now carry back the pencil to a groupe, which, we feel assured, will always be looked at with complacence, whether painted in the deepest shades of distress, or in the gayest colourings of prosperity.

The honoured, and, surely we may now be permitted to call her, the honourable Jane Atwood,—after crowning the long fidelity of her worthy lover with hopes that filled his honest heart with joy,—was no sooner left alone, than she took from her pocket the packet, concerning which the good apothecary had excited her curiosity; nay more, had moved her pity. But what were her emotions, when, on opening the envelope, she saw the well-known characters of Sir Guise Stuart! Since the hour of her escape from the rash action she had committed on his

his

his account, she had never suffered even his name to pass her lips; and being at length thoroughly convinced of his unworthiness, she had exchanged the softer sentiment in his favour, for as much of dislike as was consistent with a nature so gentle as hers.

But the very address of the letter,—‘To the most injured, from the most penitent,’—was, of itself, sufficient to create very powerful feelings; this interesting superscription, however, did not occasion a moment’s balance in her mind on what to resolve, as to the letter itself. “I hope,” said she, “from my soul, that it is dictated by penitence; but be the motive of writing it what it may, worlds should not tempt me now to read it; and surely it was wrong in Mr. Burton, who, alas! is but too well acquainted with our sad story, to deliver it; and from whence could he receive it? Where is this unhappy—this ill-fated man? Perhaps he is in the heaviness of some deep distress, or of a dire sickness. Mr. Burton spoke of his having been given over, yet mentioned hopes of doing well.

well. Praise be to God, he is not fit—ah, none of us are fit to die!”

Reflections like these forced their way to her trembling lips; her streaming eyes were fixed on the direction of the letter; and when her apostrophe ended, True George tapped at her door to gratify himself with one more look before he retired to rest. She was precisely in the situation above described, when he entered her apartment; and, seeing a letter in her hand, stood aloof, lest he should seem to be obtrusive or impertinent; but without asking the cause, he tried whatever affection could suggest to remove the effect. “And I left you, Mrs. Jane, in such good spirits, just before I answered the Squire’s bell!” cried the poor fellow. “George,” said the afflicted girl, holding the letter near enough for the address to be read; “I have received a paquet from—but, you see by whom it was written.”

“Ye—ye—yes, Mrs. Jane, ye—yes, I—I do: from Sir—Gui—Guise—Stu—Stuart!” replied George in a stammer; after which, and a stop to take breath, he added, rather
more

more connectedly, "I—I—don't now wonder then, Mrs. Jane, that you—you are in the way I see you; but don't think, Mrs. Jane, I can bear to see you cry,—and whatever may be in that letter to make those tears fall so fast, don't think any kind words Mr. Partington may have forced you to say, per—perhaps against your will, shall make True George hold you to what you spoke in his favour. I have often heard what first love is, that it goes to the grave with some folks, let other folks be never so false-hearted, heigho! I think it will go to the grave with me: but indeed,—indeed, Jane, I had rather see you happy with any body you liked, than unhappy with any body you don't, a thousand thousand times over, though it were myself, heigho!—so you are not to think of what Mr. Partington made you promise."

"Made me!" repeated the deeply penetrated Jane: "no, dear and generous George, the promise I gave was willing and sincere; this hand is yours;—this heart—would it were more worthy,—is every moment more
sensible

sensible of your unremitted goodness to me, or if I have deserved any share of that goodness, it is from having kept you from a hand, which, alas! never, never can be again what it was;—what,—for your sake as much as my own,—I wish it were!”

George uttered not a word, even though the purified and precious hand thus again given had been at his lips some moments, but soon after the fair and trembling form of all he loved sunk into his arms.

“As to the letter,” exclaimed Jane, on recovering, “it was my settled purpose not to read it; before you came into the room, Mr. Burton delivered it with every mark of caution; but I gather that the unhappy writer of it has been dangerously sick. The letter will doubtless mention particulars.’ Thus, giving it to George, she said, “I here place it in the best way to serve the unfortunate writer; my dearest George will look over it with a good and merciful eye: offer his assistance to—to the unhappy—should it be within his power, and either impart or suppress its contents to his Jane, as he
judge

judges it right:—so good night, dearest George.”

Jane Atwood had left the room before George could make any reply, but had she remained longer, it is probable her lover would not have felt himself either willing or able to speak; the three strong spells which in two little words accompanied his name, “*my dearest George*,” had bound him so fast, that he appeared almost to be fixed in an entire charm on the spot where it was wrought. But when he could sufficiently attend to mortal things, he opened Sir Guise Stuart’s packet and read what follows.

‘ DEAR INJURED GIRL,

‘ Conscious of having forfeited every claim
‘ to your esteem, to your good wishes and
‘ good faith, even to your belief in the
‘ representation I have now to mention, to
‘ what¹ am I reduced? yet, as the generous
‘ and honourable man who undertakes to
‘ deliver this, can attest its truth, I will
‘ venture to throw my case on your com-
‘ passion. O! if you, or either of my
‘ deeply wronged and justly offended children,
‘ could

‘ could know the life I have led under the
‘ tyranny of the vilest of women, and most
‘ ungrateful of men—lady Stuart and her
‘ abandoned Miles—who, after plundering
‘ me, have left me to famine and the remorse
‘ of conscience, in an almost shell of the
‘ abbey;—which they have pulled almost into
‘ ruins upon me:—and in the midst of
‘ which, without a servant, friend, or neigh-
‘ bour, but the poor good apothecary, and
‘ Mr. True George, the best of beings: on
‘ whose charity both my body and mind,
‘ alas! are thrown. O could you know
‘ this, I should not want an advocate in
‘ your gentle breast. Refuse me not, I
‘ beseech you, the consolation to hear,
‘ that, in the midst of my distress and
‘ heavy sickness, *you* will not curse me,
‘ but use your interest with the good—
‘ alas, too good—Fitzortons to find the
‘ residence of my son and daughter. I
‘ can neither think, without horror, of them
‘ or you—nor the Fitzortons—alas, neither
‘ of the living nor the dead,—in their family
‘ or in my own;—and yet I can now think of
‘ nothing

‘ nothing else. Forgive me, O! forgive
‘ the penitent

GUISE STUART,

These sentiments affected the generous heart of True George, scarcely less powerfully than they would have done that of Jane Atwood; and it was the first impression on the former, to make the latter partaker of them, and that with the best intentions in the world; to place the present repentant state of Sir Guise in the fairest and strongest light to the woman he had wronged. But after revolving the matter on his pillow, he thought it his duty to consult his coadjutor, Olivia, on the subject; and was favoured with an opportunity, in the course of the same morning, while Henry Fitzorton took a walk with his children: “ ’An it please you, my lady,” said he, “ tho’ there was nothing new under the sun in king Solomon’s time, I think times are altered, and that a miracle, as they call it in the scriptures, is at work at the blessed minute I am talking to my lady.” In proof of this assertion, the

the good George, in his way, gave a history of what attached to the Baronet's epistle, by way of introduction, and then presented the epistle itself.

The colour varied in the cheeks of Olivia, several times, during the perusal, as the emotions of pity, regret, and wonder, were excited in her breast. "We have been some time preparing ourselves for a change of this happy kind you know," said he. "Poor man! It is never too late to be good my trusty friend; but, I think, it may be as well not to shew our friend Jane the letter, for the present: I am going to join my dearest husband and children, who are strolling, this fine morning, somewhere about the park and gardens; and as I walk along, I will think what step seems most discreet for us to take; and if you will come into my dressing-room, after dear Jane has left me, we will confer."

"Yes, my lady, I always know when Mrs. Jane is coming, before I see her pretty face," said George.

"Indeed!" exclaimed Olivia, "how so?"

"By her step, my lady. I dare say your ladyship knows the squire's step from a thousand."

"Then you are within hearing, are you?"

"Your ladyship knows that my little closet for whips, and spurs, and angling rods, and nets, and other little odd gimcracks, is just under the great stair-case." "And so," observed Olivia smiling, "you angled for her heart, and then put the poor thing in your net, did you? That is the way you caught her, is it Mr. George? Well, as I'm sure you will use your captive kindly, I hope you may be in your gimcrack closet when she next comes down stairs."

"With God's blessing, my lady, I hope I shall," said George, making his bow and exit in high satisfaction.

Olivia again read the penitentials of Sir Guise Stuart. An idea struck her as she was putting the packet in her pocket which agi-

tated her extremely, and at length suffused her sweet eyes in tears. She sat down on a bench in one of the windings of the shrubbery, to recover herself, but the idea seemed to gain strength. The sound, however, of well known voices, which would at any time have cheered her drooping heart—for they were those of her husband, son, and daughter—soon made her spring up, and run, with all the earnestness of unaffected conjugal and maternal love, to meet them; Henry perceiving her, had assisted the children to hide: the little ones concealed themselves amongst the shrubs, while the father stood behind some laurels; and just as Olivia past, Henry ran, from this poetical retreat, into the arms of his wife. Soon after, the little John was discovered through the emblematic leaves of a young fir, and his sister suffered herself to be espied,

‘ Half in a shower of clust’ring roses lost.’

Olivia’s tears became, in a moment, softer than the dew; yet they were still to be seen

on her cheek, Henry was the first to observe them, for he felt them on his lips. "My dear Olivia has been weeping," said he, "how is this?" Ere she had time to answer this question, which breathed more melody and softness than the plaining notes of aerial music—an innocent strife between the children, demanded the adjustment of their mother. Little Caroline, who, in her walks, was continually in search of something beautiful and singular in its kind, whether animated or vegetable, and who discovered an early taste and delicacy in the selection, had found what she deemed important, and came running with it in her closed hand towards her brother, asking, at every step, "How much he would give for a sight of what she had found?" "Nothing," answered John; "I can see it without paying for it, if I thought it worth while." Caroline defying him, John proceeded to actions, which discovered more of resolution than gallantry. Olivia observed "he should never be rude to young ladies, who were objects of protection, not of assault."

"Besides," said Henry, "it is not pretty to *steal* secrets, when people *offer* to sell them; but, if they did not, a secret is a thing sacred, and it is mean and wicked to pry into it." Before his father had done speaking, John desisted; and yielding his point,—just as his uncle, on any stronger occasion, would have yielded,—he ran to kiss the pretty hand that held the object of contention. Caroline, hereupon, would voluntarily have let him into the secret, which, in truth,—was only a captive grasshopper,—had not Henry repeated his remark, as to the sanctity of a secret.

But no sooner was harmony restored amongst the little ones, than Olivia said with some vivacity: "You think then, my Henry, that even brothers and sisters, which are, in a manner, parts of one another, may have their little reserves?"—"Undoubtedly," replied Henry, "and, as they grow up, their great ones too; secrets ought to be inviolable. For my part, I know not how to forgive any body, who would insidiously rob me of what I judged

right to conceal.”—“ But then, I presume,” observed his wife, tremulously, “ you do not extend this reservation to married people : you would not excuse a man or woman, bound by ties so near and dear, to have an uncommunicated action, or even a thought, of any consequence ?”

The emphatic manner in which Olivia spoke, proceeded from a certain delicate consciousness in herself, but made Henry, once more, tremble for his *own* secret, and he hesitated ; which his lady interpreting against herself, observed, she felt his answer in his silence. It was, in truth, an idea of this kind which had at first brought tears into her eyes, and was now starting them again. “ I confess,” said she, “ I have, for some time, treated my Henry with guilty unkindness, by shutting up, in my own breast, a certain transaction he had a right to know, and no other excuse have I to offer, than that, as it did not immediately connect with any thing essential to his repose, I thought the discovery of it might be made when it would be more satisfactory to him.

Pray,

Pray, pray, forgive me, my dearest love, and you shall have the knowledge and history of it instantly," continued she with equal sweetness, and was just about to draw the explanatory letter of Sir Guise Stuart from her pocket.

"I will only excuse you," answered Henry, much relieved by finding the secret had so well shifted ground, "by your promising to nurse, fondle, guard, and entertain it in your own bosom, till you think it is in the state to give both of us, and all whom it may concern, the most pleasure; but I would not hear it now for the world."

"Heigho," sighed and smiled Olivia, "well, then, as I do still think it may be better by-and-by, I believe I must accept your conditions. But I wish you had a secret too, Henry; perhaps you have."

Henry was again embarrassed, but as speedily released, by her innocently saying, with a gaiety that cleared every cloud of apprehension, "But if you have not got one, I beg you will provide yourself as soon as you can, and not tell me a word of

it; and then, when it is just as you wish it to be, we will make an exchange."

"A bargain," answered Henry, "and I seal it with a kiss."

"And these dear things shall be witnesses to the compact," exclaimed Olivia, embracing her children.

"Yes, and sign and seal it, in like manner," said Henry, catching them from her arms. Thus the little family party were all good friends, though each kept their secret. The first notice was now given by the dinner bell; and the flowery scenes, where the treaty of pacification had been made, and the articles agreed upon, were left for the castle.

CHAPTER XIX.

Nothing could have fallen out more favourably than the little domestic occurrences, above related, for reconciling the truly delicate Olivia to her benevolent plan, and encouraging her to pursue it. Under these cheering circumstances, she turned her thoughts towards the unfortunate Baronet's present situation, with more energy: and gave, to the 'genial current of her soul,' an uninterrupted course. She was, however, unusually reserved, even though uncommonly happy, during the whole time of dressing. She gave no answer to Jane's wish, to know what she would be pleased to put on. "Have I been unfortunate enough to offend my dearest mistress?" questioned the gentle attendant. "O! no, I have only been in a sort of day-dream, dear Jane," said her mistress, "in which my mind has been so much employed, that I quite forgot my person; and yet, though I did not chat as usual, I don't know that I

ever thought of you more, since I began to love you; and that is, you know, now many years ago." The grateful Jane bowed her head so lowly, that her cheek reached her lady's hand, which she ventured to press to her lips. Olivia then fixed on the ornaments of the day, and her toilette being finished, just as the preparation bell gave the last summons, "I have something to say to our good George," said Olivia, "do step and tell him I want to speak with him; possibly you may find him in his watch-box of guns, traps, angles, and other little odd things, underneath the stairs; I have heard of his being there a little before dinner; but be he where he will, I know I cannot make him happier than to send for him by such a messenger."

Olivia's orders were smilingly given, and smilingly obeyed; and when George made his appearance, his lady in the same flow of good spirits, and good humour, informed him, that after bestowing on the subject, in which they were mutually interested, all the attention of which she was mistress, she could not but confess there was a difficulty
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in it, that inclined her to believe much good might arise from calling in a third person as auxiliary; and the only point to settle was who this should be—to Jane, to Henry, to Parlington, or to the apothecary, she had her objections. “In the immediate stage of the affair we stand in need of some one, my good fellow,” said she, “who, by his dispassionate wisdom, may instruct us how to proceed in a matter which I take to be of real importance; for I cannot but look upon the letter of this wretched man, as the forerunner of something extraordinary. Now if it were any way possible, to prevail on my brother John Fitzorton, to hear any thing which relates to one, against whom his wrath has been so often justly kindled, he is the man in the world to be resorted to on this occasion.”

“An please you my lady,” said George, “if it was the devil himself—God forgive me for speaking of him before your ladyship—Mr. Sir John would see that the devil had his due, though he defied him and all

his works; and if so be my lady as you think we want a little help in this business, Mr. Sir John is your man: only we must not say any thing to Sir Guise about it, as he would be frightened out of his wits, for he has always been mortally afraid of Mr. Sir John."

Olivia said she would turn the matter in her mind again, desired he would continue, meanwhile, his attentions to Sir Guise, and particularly to assure him that he might depend on the prayers of the good Jane.—
"You know, my friend," said Olivia, "we may very safely promise him this, especially as I will myself undertake, at a fit time, to make her acquainted with the sentiments of his epistle."

When Henry took his afternoon wood walk, from which Olivia excused herself, she sat down to address John Fitzorton in behalf of the man on earth he held most in contempt. The reader, however, will believe that the cause could not have fallen into better hands, and that it would not have been possible for an advocate to have had greater
power

power with the heart of the person addressed. But the heart of John Fitzorton, in a case of conscience, was not, as we have already seen, to be biassed by love itself.

While the fair pleader was ruminating what arguments to employ, the good apothecary craved audience, to relate a very pathetic scene, of which he had just been a spectator at the abbey. He informed her, that the thick melancholy which had for some time settled on Sir Guise, had, at length, brought on so utter a desolation of spirits, that much of his day passed in tears; and when these refused to flow, an anguish little short of madness succeeded: but on every return to reason he called out on his children, and the injured Fitzortons, and could he live to receive the pardon of these in this world, his punishment even in the next would be made more tolerable, and said if he could converse but five minutes with Sir John, he would tell him something for the good of squire Charles, and miss Caroline.

“ Indeed! then tell our good George to be in readiness to take dispatches to the post-house;

house; and do you Mr. Burton draw up the case of your unhappy patient, just as you have stated it to me. Let us lose no time my worthy friend—in the next room we shall find all writing materials.”

CHAPTER XX.

SUCH a letter then was written, enclosing such a case, as brought John with all speed to the castle.

“ My dear, dear brother !” said Henry, who happened to be walking in his park as John rode by, “ how kind is this visit ! how unexpected ! what a treat will it be to my dear Olivia and our children ! you cannot think how your little namesake grows, and more like his uncle every day. Ah ! may he prove as worthy ! I languished to tell you how infinitely sensible I am of your goodness in your dispatches brought me by George, and of my wife’s incomparable excellencies, and if I am not even yet as happy as—I ought to be,—it is the sad infirmity of my nature, and you must not chide. Olivia remains
blessed,

bleſſed, our children are healthy and happy : their father is not wretched. No, he is affectionately grateful—and now his dear John is added to the family groupe—all—all—will be as it ſhould be.”

Theſe expreſſions were uttered with all the accuſtomed ardour of the ſpeaker, while he walked by the ſide of John’s horſe, claſping his brother’s hand : yet John could perceive, even in Henry’s account of happineſs, the traces of infelicity, but he knew it was like the touches of an old, and, probably, incurable diſorder, whoſe virulence being paſt, nothing but a weakneſs remained—he, therefore, heard Henry’s effuſions without advertiſing to the lets and hindrances which accompanied them ; congratulating him on the health of the children.

“ And here they are,” ſaid Henry, “ coming with their dear mother to give their uncle welcome.”

The day was paſt amidſt domeſtic ſatiſfactions, which did not allow John any opportunity to confer with Olivia, or purſue the object of his journey, but at tea he obſerved
that

that he should not make his appearance any more till supper, and that he should have occasion for George. Having thus secured the intermediate hours, he set out as soon as it was dusk, attended by George, for the abbey; at the gate of which the good apothecary was just remounting his horse, after having paid his evening visit to his patient: he expressed infinite satisfaction at the sight of John Fitz-orton, but said, Sir Guise's personal health went much more rapidly to decline than he expected, and that a nervous kind of terror had, since the evening, seized his mind, which called for something composing, and for that he was going home.

Though John still distrusted the Baronet's professions, and determined to judge for himself, he did not prevent Burton from setting off full speed with every mark of alarm and solicitude. George observed that he never saw the doctor look more in a fright.

"Let us go into the abbey," said John, "I know not the way through these ruins, and you must conduct me."

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When they had gained the great hall they were accosted by the woman who had undertaken the office of cook—"O! Mr. George," exclaimed she, "this poor quaker man is, I fancy, very bad to night. He moans and takes on most piteously: I never go within sight of him you know, but he made my old heart ache to hear him just now.—However I believe he is safe for the night, as I heard him go into the room where he sleeps a little while ago, and since that, I thought I heard the curtains draw backwards and forwards, and for my part I think you had better not disturb him to-night, for he does not often get any rest."—George, receiving a nod from John Fitzorton, continued his way through the apartments till he came to that of the Baronet.

The door of his bed-chamber was left open, and a voice from the bed was distinctly heard pronouncing these words:—"O! my poor, poor children!—my murdered wife!—my injured friends!—why do I yet live to empoison the air shut up like the ghost of some murderer in the mansion where my foul deed

deeds were committed?—here am I left to be haunted by my own guilty spirits. Would I had died when the generous John Fitzorton first avenged his father.—To what am I reduced! but how much more to be envied is the corpse of Sir Armine in the honoured tomb of his ancestors, and his pure soul taking its reward in heaven, than the vile body of Sir Guise, a burthen to himself, and a stain to his posterity, stretched on this bed of wretchedness, and his guilty mind in terror of the hell it merits.”

The self-accusing spirit, in which every part of this was uttered, the tone that gave energy to every upbraiding, and the deep groans that succeeded, chilled the very heart of George True, and even awed the mind of John Fitzorton. “Yes, these are genuine—even Sir Guise Stuart no longer deceives. These demonstrations of awakened conscience are to be relied on. Let us advance.”

In trembling silence George obeyed, and was in an instant by the side of the Baronet's bed begging him to be comforted, and to put his trust in God, for that we were told
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he would pardon the wickedest creature that ever lived they if repented.—“Impossible! either that God or man can pardon me,” answered Sir Guise, starting up. “But, oh! Mr. George, if those whom I have most wronged could see me, at this moment, they might well be satisfied—even John Fitzorton might relent, and while he triumphed in my woes might almost pity them.”

“He does!” exclaimed John, who had gone to the other side of the bed, where the curtains were close drawn, as if unwilling to surprize the wretched man; “John Fitzorton does relent and almost pity.”

Sir Guise heard, and took shelter in the arms of George; then turning his head towards the place from whence the voice proceeded, and not perceiving the person to whom it belonged, “O, God!” exclaimed he, in a fearful kind of whisper, “how conscience delights to torture me. I thought George I heard Sir John Fitzorton speak to me as plain as I ever heard him speak in my life, and in a voice of compassion;—alas! it was but my distempered fancy: how indeed,

indeed, should it be any thing else? He, of all mankind most scorns"—

"And perhaps most commiserates you," resumed the voice in yet milder accents.

"Again!" cried the Baronet, "but I suppose you heard nothing."

"Yes I did, sir; I heard Mr. Sir John himself, who came on purpose to see what could be done for you, having heard your melancholy case, he is in the room now, but don't tremble so, for pity's sake."

"In my room!" reiterated Sir Guise, "yet you would not have the heart to deceive me!"

"He deceives you not," said John, gently moving the curtain, and shewing himself. "The hand of the Lord God seems now to be upon you, and that of a feeble mortal is no longer necessary. It would be presumptive. Your wish to see me was a far greater motive of my visit in this place, than any wish to see you in additional affliction."

"O, sir," answered the now truly penitent Baronet, "if any thing could add to it,
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it would be this unmerited goodness from you. Can you, sir, extend your bounty so far as to tell me, whether my offended children are alive?"

"They are," replied John.

"Blessed be God!" exclaimed the Baronet, "may I ask, sir—"

"Farther questions might at this time fatigue you," interposed John: "compose yourself. Mr. Burton will speedily be here to assist that endeavour, and if it will seem more easy to you, George shall remain till he arrives."

Sir Guise was indeed exhausted, and could hardly articulate his thanks, but begged George might attend his master home.

"I shall probably repeat my visit shortly," said John, nothing sternly: "in the mean time I recommend you to cultivate more and more your acquaintance with the Power, who is all-sufficient to restore the body and the soul whatever be their condition."

Sir Guise clasped his hands together in a supplicatory manner, bowed his head, and kept his eyes fixed alternately on John Fitz-
orton

orton and True George, till those inestimable men had left the room.

CHAPTER XXI.

GEORGE had scarcely opened his lips during the whole of the preceding scene, nor did he at all presume to break silence while he went home; as he knew, by the length of his steps and violence of his movements, that John was hard at work, and would not brook interruption. By an involuntary impulse, however, he exclaimed, "Poor Sir Guise! a man had better be an innocent dog, than a christian sinner, when conscience has once got hold of him."

No remark being returned to this burst, he had nothing more to do than try to keep pace with his master, who strode on furiously, and without the utterance of a word, till just as the latter ascended the castle steps, he said, "I shall have no farther occasion for you to-night; I shall not appear at supper; let me not be expected."

George

George obeyed with his usual taciturnity on these occasions. John in his philosophicals, as he used to call them, he seldom presumed to hazard even an opinion: but, in the poeticals of Henry, he frequently relieved himself from this suppression by pouring out all that was in his mind.

John Fitzorton was extremely struck with the situation of Sir Guise Stuart. He came prejudiced against his penitence, and prepared for his hypocrisy: but the conscious struggles, mental horror, and bodily decay, in which he found that unhappy culprit, his self-execrations, his incessant callings out on the injured, and more than all, his bearing to see and looking steadily at any of the ever-dreaded Fitzortons, threw him into a train of reflection which lasted almost till the dawn of day: even in that chamber, which had been the scene of many a powerful contention with himself, and of many a virtuous resolve. "What, although," said he to himself, "I hope my life would never have eaten the bread, nor my head reposed on the pillow of a foe, whom I had wronged; I can conceive

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conscience to be such a punisher, that when once its scourge is applied in earnest, the affair is taken out of the hands of man;—and the sentiment of commiseration, the aggrieved then feels for the aggressor, is a part of the attribute of mercy, which God excites in the breast to attemper his own divine blow.”

John rose to pursue his musings in the shrubbery, on his return from which, he met Olivia. After a little bound of the heart, and flutter of the spirits, which he always felt at the sight of this amiable woman,—and receding a step or two, he hastily advanced, took her hand, and related every circumstance of his abbey adventure, closing the whole with a repetition of the sentiments, which had formed his soliloquy; “And which may be considered, my dear Olivia,” said he, “in some measure as a justification of what you have done for the man, who has been the pest of his own family, and the despoiler of ours.”

“O, doubt it not, my noble brother: I feel that we have been acting under an influence

ence mightier than our own," answered Olivia. "Do you know, last night I dreamed, that every weed in our garden turned into a flower; the air and skies were as we may fancy those of Paradise; and, while I was yet gazing at the celestial and unclouded blue, methought a sudden glory shot immediately over my head, and an angel of light, that took the form of a new born babe, held forth a tablet of precious gems, on which the rays of the glory played, and on which I read these comfortable words.—'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.'—Then the cherub, whose face had to my imagination, exactly the shape and lineaments of my Henry's, bestowed on me a smile that made him look still more like my husband, and with one hand pointed to heaven, while the other turned the tablet, I saw, on the reverse, engraven in letters of sapphire, under a crown of glory—'I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee.'—So that you may be certain

we are not doing any thing displeasing to the fountain of mercy, by raising up such as are fallen:—and if I was not afraid you would laugh at my simple notions, I could almost believe this vision had been sent by our angel parents to imitate their forgiveness. —But, how hard it is, that our Henry is still shut from his share of what his bounteous nature is so fitted to enjoy!—He said last night, he thought that you and he had changed characters,—that he was philosopher Henry, and you poet John, and mused and wandered more than himself;—What would I have given to have told him my dream! but I thought it best to see you first, and take your wisdom on it, for you were always, you know, my oracle.”

“In the spirit of which,” answered John, much affected with what had been related, and with the manner of the relater, “I must strictly enjoin you to a little more forbearance, and—”

True George came at full speed, with the remains of what breath his speed had left him to say, “Breakfast, please your honours, will

will be ready in a few minutes, and the squire is come down; but, O your honours! there is shocking news brought by Mr. Burton of the poor quakerish gentleman,—he has sat up with him all night, and I thought he would sometimes have gone raving mad, and he said, ‘his poor soul would be in burning hell very shortly, if his children did not come to forgive him.’—Hush—I see Mr. Henry at the castle door, your honours.”

George vanished.

“O! what a cruel thing it is, none of us can discover where these dear wanderers have betaken themselves!” sighed Olivia. “What a consolation must it be for children to see and to forgive a truly penitent parent; and what an encouragement for that parent to persevere in well doing! Ah! surely the Almighty will guide us by some directing ray to these worthy creatures: they must be under his protecting eye. But, alas! what vain trials have I not made to find them! Yet, as their substitutes, let us persist in our good offices to save this dreadful example of divine vengeance.”

John declared he felt himself much disordered, and a cup of coffee might do him good. Olivia affectionately took his arm, pressed it to her side, and led him into breakfast.

CHAPTER XXII.

AMONGST other pleasant consequences that had happened to the good apothecary, growing out of the splendid fixpence, was, his being promoted to the office of family-apothecary to the Fitzortons, on a handsome yearly stipend—also general medical inspector of Olivia's cottages, at a distinct salary paid out of that lady's privy-purse, and a desire that he would consider the castle as his home at bed or board whenever he was on duty, at, or near Fitzorton. Thus, full half of his time was passed with Henry and Olivia, and it was as customary for Burton to be seen at nine o'clock in the winter, and eight in the summer, as for the clock to strike the hour. Indeed, so good humoured and sincere a creature had he proved himself on many occasions,

occasions, that the master, mistress, children, and domestics of the mansion, seemed to miss him more when professional business intervened, than if that clock had been carried from the cupola which enclosed it. He was, at length, become a necessary part of the castle, and went in at the time of the morning repast as duly as the repast itself. Of late, in their own persons he had little practise. The Fitzorton family were in the general enjoyment of good health, and whatever Henry suffered from occasional sinkings too low, or risings too high, was imputed to Nerves,—one of the most convenient maladies that ever bore the blame of the head or heart, and in short, the best excuse that ever offered itself to the physician, when he cannot find out the complaint of the patient, and to the patient when he does not wish his case should be discovered by the physician.

Our apothecary, however, always made mechanically a morning tour of every pulse in the room, watch in hand, and observed so pleasantly on surrounding objects, or contrived by other relations so to interest the

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family,

family, that he was himself the principal cause of the irregularity, of too quick or too slow; and the pulsation seldom went on, in the orderly way he declared it ought to do, till he had done talking, laughing, or crying; in which pulse-affecting operations—he had the art of producing universal sympathy.

He was in the act of counting the throbs of Henry's animated little time-keeper, when John and Olivia came in.

Little John, in ludicrous imitation, was applying his hand to Caroline's wrist; Olivia was in smiles till she came near enough to perceive that her husband was in tears.

“ They have been produced by joy, my Olivia,” said Henry, “ Mr. Burton has been giving me such an account of the gratitude of your cottagers, who have, it seems, agreed amongst themselves, on the day that you next bless me as a father, to have a fête of their own; all your old women, and my old men are to dance together, even though some of them should be carried from their bed to their ball-room, which is to be

at

at Goody Brabson's, who is to be mistress of the ceremonies, and who, I am glad to find, has got quite stout again. I am so pleased with this generous thought, that I and the children will go, the moment we have breakfasted, and give our hands to every one of them. I must not suffer you to venture, my love, the walk is too long; and as to the coach—no—you would be too much affected—and as for our philosopher—”

“ I cannot attend you this morning, it is true,” said John, “ because I have other employments; but I desire you will bespeak Goody Brabson my partner; as I am resolved, for the first time in my life, to dance on that occasion also. And if the founder of the festival should chance to be of Olivia's sex, I intreat that her name may be Angelica, and if of your's, Raphael.

“ O' my conscience, 'tis as I said,” observed Henry, smiling on Olivia, who had been bound in happy silence, “ my brother has got into my character. Angelica or Raphael! I protest, I should sooner have expected

expected from my brother John, a recommendation for Aminadab or Rebecca."

"Why, you are to know, I have heard a dream lately interpreted; and, I think, those names would suit some of the characters in the vision," said John.

Olivia coloured yet more highly—the allusion struck her—"The names are, however, beautiful," said she, "and our John makes so few requests, that—"

"If we did not grant them," said Henry, catching a hand of his brother and wife, kissing, and then joining them, "we should be most unworthy."

The breakfast was no sooner ended, than Henry and the children set out for the cottages. John then begged to be closeted a few minutes with the apothecary, after which he returned to Olivia, and told her that Burton's account of Sir Guise Stuart made it, as he conceived, proper to take strong and immediate steps; of which he would undertake the guidance, if she would promise to follow, unquestioned, the plan he should lay down. Olivia promised.

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“In the first place then, and this is the hardest thing to consent to, you must let me dispose of your husband at Mr. Partington’s; and, as I presume, it will be as difficult a point to get Henry from you, as you from Henry, it is necessary for me to go myself to the Bury, in the first instance, that I may make Partington confidential; and then an object will not be wanting, on which to found an invitation to the Bury, so pressing that Henry shall not know well how to refuse; and, if he did, Partington is not the man to take a denial.”

“Heigho!” sighed Olivia, “but I am sure ’tis to some good end—else at such a time as this—when—when—perhaps in a few months—”

“You may be able to present us with an infant Angelica or Raphael, lovely as that in your vision,” said John, very tenderly.

“I own matters run very untowardly just now—I could wish—in short, not to deal in mysteries beyond the absolute necessity of preserving them—know, that the project I

am engaging in, is to bring this, at length, conscience-smitten father to his children,"

"His children!" repeated Olivia, "but, in Pity's name, how are they to be found?"

"Be that my endeavour," said John, "as Burton assures me it would be at the hazard of life and reason, to move the parent to the children, we must try what can be done, that the children may go to the parent. But as Henry has been so long kept out of these transactions, the sudden appearance of poor Charles Stuart, and the horrors that now hang over the living ruins of the abbey, might be too much for my brother's tender heart to bear."

John rose and rang the bell, True George appeared. "My horses," said John. George disappeared. "In three days expect my return," said John to Olivia; "tell Henry I give him leave to think what he likes. He has rambled long enough. 'Tis now my turn to be a rover. Let him have his laugh. For you, Olivia, dear good Olivia, for you I promise I will rob you of
your

your beloved Henry but a few days. I shall ask but ten, from the day I steal him from you. If, in that space, I succeed not in my efforts, he shall be returned to you; and if I should bring my points to bear, the worst that can happen, will be your giving an Angelica or Raphael to the world at Partington Bury, instead of Fitzorton castle. What matters it where a cherub is born, my friend?"

George entering rapidly, exclaimed "The horse, your honour." John bade Olivia adieu, with a voice somewhat obstructed; for she had been heaping blessings upon him, and his undertaking; called him by the endearing names, truly indeed applied, of "guide, philosopher, and friend," and sealed her wish, for his health, long life, and long happiness, with a pressure of the hand, that thrilled every fibre of his struggling heart.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A CONSIDERABLE time has elapsed since any mention has been made of the fugitive part of the abbey family, and yet we feel that Olivia, or even Henry Fitzorton, cannot, upon principles of general good-will, wish more to hear of their welfare, than such of our readers as have hearts to follow the fortunes of persecuted virtue.

On our bidding them a melancholy adieu, indeed, we prepared such readers for a long absence; but the party was formed of too many oppressed and interesting beings, to leave the sympathizing mind ultimately without a wish, that in the course of the history they might be heard of again. The hints which were thrown out in the last chapter, however veiled, cannot have failed to reanimate that hope: for the reader is aware, that John Fitzorton was not a man to raise expectation without endeavouring to gratify it; nor to sport in romantic visions, or fold himself up in mysterious enterprize, unless
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for some important end, alike rational and honourable.

Although Olivia had no suspicion that her brother-in-law was in the secret of the residence of those wanderers, which her search could never find, our readers, who are in the possession of more family secrets even than Olivia, have not a doubt but to him they shall look for intelligence on this subject.

In truth, father Arthur's little society, from almost their first movements to their final establishment, had been governed by John Fitzorton.

Soon after the departure of the good Charles and Caroline Stuart, from the polluted abbey, John met them on the way, when introducing Mrs. Herbert, and the young Johanna, he thus addressed Caroline :
“ Youth and age now offer themselves to your notice. They have many years been under my immediate protection. I am now ambitious to place them under yours. The itinerant situation of a soldier, has often made the trust difficult to me ; but, after
much

much search, I have found a pleasant asylum for them, where it is my wish Johanna should pass another year or two of retreat, under the care of Mrs. Herbert, before she steps into the world. The recess I have chosen appears formed for an instructive and virtuous, yet social solitude. But it is on too large a scale for two females; and I have been puzzling how to bring the abode and establishment within compass. The Providence which gave to my protection these two persons, in the first instance, now seems to direct, in the second, that I should transfer part of those pleasing cares upon you and yours; because, I judge, they may mitigate your own, while they alleviate mine. I had thoughts of placing them, with some of the dearest parts of my own family, at the castle; but those ideas, on after reflection, have been abandoned. What say you then, my friends, will you receive two more unfortunates into your party, and in a flowery unobserved recess, make a little world of good beings? Driven, unjustly, by a female fiend, out of one paradise, will you, my worthy exiles, suffer
female

female innocents to conduct you to another?"

Johanna's unfulfilled looks, and Mrs. Herbert's engaging deportment, and the knowledge of John's recommendation, spoke the assent of Caroline, who embraced both the ladies: Arthur and Dennison smiled a welcome.

"I have but one fear," said Caroline, pressing the hands of Johanna, and Mrs. Herbert—"is it quite fair—is it not, indeed, cruel for us to carry our sorrowing hearts into a residence your virtue has prepared for the happy? or, even if we were inclined to this selfishness, might not yet more troubled spirits detect our privacy, and again expel us from Elysium?"

"And if they did," said Johanna, "we should not be expelled from one another, and methinks, in this social retirement, aided by the counsels of my honoured guardian, so he has now permitted me to call him, we could not be unprotected, or unhappy, in any part of the earth."

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“ They are my children from this moment, and for ever,” exclaimed Arthur.

“ And the ever dear friends of Caroline and Charles,” said the afflicted brother and sister.

“ And long may they live as the honoured ladies, of a feeble, but, I hope, faithful, old servant,” ejaculated Dennison.

“ And Floresco sal be their slave, and sal get strong great big man to workey till him is older as Mr. Dennisons,” exclaimed the little Indian, leaping as he spoke.

“ Respecting monasteries, and remote continental excursions,” resumed John, “ curiosity is more at work in these than nearer home; and I pledge myself that the sequestered spot which I have fixed on, though not more than two or three days’ travel from hence, shall baffle enquiry, and effectually screen you from every wicked obtrusion so long as may be necessary.”

John’s scheme was adopted, and after adjusting military business at quarters, he gave some comfortable finishings to his benevolent plan,

plan, and returned to father Arthur's party, whom, with an adroitness peculiar to all his designs when once settled, he conducted to their new abode in the romantic island of Guernsey. There having staid, to see that no accommodations were wanting which his power might supply, he pressed alternatively the hands of each individual of the groupe, and returned to the castle.

In John Fitzorton's recess then, the abbey party remained, not only during the whole period of Henry and Olivia's continental excursions, without an idea entering into the mind of either that Charles or Caroline Stuart were under his guardianship. Although, in one of their tours, the travellers had passed almost within view of the leafy retreat which concealed them.

Their social solitude was eventful to some of its members. In Johanna's gentleness and improvements, and in Mrs. Herbert's assiduous good offices, Caroline found some balm,—the balm of friendship,—for the deep wounds of her disappointed heart. Charles found yet more. The laws of romance are
so

so frequently at war, not only in the writer's book, but in the reader's mind, with the laws of nature, that we fear some will think the character of this young hero much degenerated, when we observe that he found his fate extremely softened by the society of the interesting Johanna. The laws of truth, however, demand the information; and the object was well calculated to lighten the burthens of the wretched.

The party, indeed, all lived in the most perfect immaculacy of minds and manners, each contributing a due share to the stock of general accommodation; imperceptibly soothed the past, reconciled the present, and frowned not on the future. The patriarchal goodness of Arthur, the approved honesty of Dennison, the experienced wisdom of Mrs. Herbert, the touching simplicity of the little Indian, and the charms of Johanna, with the patronage of John, who paid, by stealth, an annual visit, were all called into action, while Charles and Caroline were happily amused by these their friends, or strengthened, by private communication, the virtue of each other; and
thus

thus the time passed on, if not without trouble, free from those paroxysms of despair, which would have embittered a state destitute of such social resources. And, in order to give permanent tranquillity to the establishment, which John had thus generously formed, the house was taken in the maiden name of Mrs. Herbert, retiring with her family, on a plan of œconomy, so exact, that country visitings, and the insipid formalities which connect therewith, were all excluded: and here they might have continued unexplored, undisturbed, even till their graves formed part of the flowers that bloomed about their residence.

Nor was the prime contriver, and conductor of this social sequestration, without some rich consolements—Alas! none more wanted consolation! Self-banished from the sight of her his soul adored, even while he was perpetually invited to remain where he might both see and hear the object of that adoration, John Fitzorton had proved that nothing but the most vigorous exercise of a determined mind, forcing itself into deeds that

that must, at least, divide the thoughts, could prevent an indulgence which would mingle shame with sorrow. A combination which he, of all human beings, was the least able to endure.—“All I have for it,” said he, on leaving the castle, “whether in peace or war, at home or abroad, is occupation: the merest trifle whereon this can be formed, is better than that solitary indolence of the soul, or what is yet worse, that ruinous activity of the passions, which with the sharpness of unavoidable misfortune blends the turpitude of voluntary guilt.”

Reflections like these were revolving in his mind, when the departure of the deserving children of a worthless father, and of an infamous step-mother was reported to him. He caught at it as one of the occasions wanting to his own virtue, and resolved to make it serviceable. The good literally wanted “a local habitation, and a name.” He supplied them with both. They stood in need of those social aids which the innocently wretched derive from communion with the worthy. Such communion could John afford: he

he could enrich the groupe by two beings whom he knew to deserve father Arthur's affociation. Many things met together to render this arrangement no less agreeable to the objects of his protection, than to those whom their more recent misfortune had recommended to him.

The blooming daughter of the ill-fated Maria, and the hapless widow of a no less ill-fated gentleman, had been long remaining at the village where the faithless mother of Johanna had been buried; but the frequent visits of John had been marked by curiosity, and misrepresented by malice; and a certain mystery in the fortunes, both of Mrs. Herbert and of Johanna, seemed to give colour to suspicion, who not being able to move the cloud, drew upon John some reflections, and upon the objects of his protection yet more.—“ So far as this trumpery respects myself,” said John, “ I should laugh it to scorn; but the innocent beings I have beckoned from the storm, one of whom, alas! I have widowed, must be no less defended in their fame than in their fortunes. The flight
of

of Caroline is an opportunity not to be slighted. I will endeavour to profit of it so as to serve mutually the protectors and the protected. When I promised the helpless Johanna, at the foot of her mother's grave, that she should not want a parent, it was a promise to stand beyond the date of my life, and to the extent of hers, and poor Herbert's relict is the death-bed legacy of a murdered friend."

CHAPTER XXIV.

WE feel that it would be cruelty to proceed in the history of the Absentees without accounting to our readers for the expression which closed the last chapter, and for another, yet more strange, in the same page, viz. that John Fitzorton had been the cause of widowhood to an innocent being, and that Herbert was the legacy of a murdered friend. John was himself the murderer—a charge which we will settle in the words of Mrs. Herbert, who, one day after much solicitation, gratified her sequestered friends with a
summary

summary account of this fatal circumstance. "It is the only subject on which I trust I need be solicited," observed the widow, "for wherefore should I grieve those whom I love.

"Colonel Herbert was at once my guardian, my lover, and my husband. He had honour in the professional part of his character, and truth, tenderness, and worth, in every other; but his nature was precipitate, and who in haste is prudent? He commanded a regiment, when John Fitzorton,—to relieve an uneasy mind,—droop not, my Johanna,—first assumed the sword; but the mind of Mr. Fitzorton, whether happy, or in distress, owned no superior. My dear Herbert felt the high pretensions of the youth, and admitted him of equal rank in the dignity of sense and virtue. The colonel and ensign were, therefore, bosom-friends. The man of forty, and the stripling of eighteen, were inseparable companions. But once, in an evil hour, my Herbert yielding, on some trifling occasion, to sudden anger—the sole error of his noble nature,—taxed his young companion
with

with having mistated a fact.—A mistater of facts, said the ensign, is a lyar.—Contrue as you may, boy, said the colonel, you have mistated a fact, and if that forms a lyar, you may apply it.—The man who dares to tell me so, retorted the ensign, shall wash away the stain either with his blood or with mine.—In one moment their swords were drawn, in the next the blade of the ensign's broke in the tenderest of human hearts; but even as life was flowing from it, a person who had been expected, came into the room to confirm the truth of what the ensign had asserted. My poor Herbert, sensible of his error, instantly made voluntary oath before that person, of his having provoked the ensign beyond the bearing of an officer or a man.—I was sent for, but alas! entered the room only to receive the last farewell.—Amelia, said the expiring Herbert, yours is the hardest lot; my friend must be acquitted with honour; eternal coward must have stuck to his name had he tamely borne my rash reproaches;—but what is to become of my wife?

wife?—all your own fortune went by your own desire to relieve part of our families:—mine was that of a soldier, and depended on my life,—and yet, I have rashly lived as if I never were to die. Alas! Amelia, I fear when the honest claims upon me are settled, and my body put into a decent grave, you will have reason to curse the hour you gave your hand to an improvident man whose profusion has been as unbounded as his love.”—“Oh! I shall bless it ever as the happiest and most honoured moment of my existence, said I.”—“Wretch that I am!” exclaimed the ensign, “let the curse be directed to me, who have impoverished the wife, and murdered the husband.”—“Fitzorton,” said the unfortunate Herbert, alternately pressing my hand and that of the ensign, to his quivering lips.—“It was unavoidable; befriend my widow.”—The pang that took him out of the world immediately followed. The ensign, dropping on his knees, swore he should instantly deliver himself up to justice, but if acquitted, would make all the miserable reparation in his power.—And, O my friends! if it were

permitted me to tell you with what sanctity he has kept his oath, and how, in my sickness, my sorrow, my almost insanity, he has saved my reason, my life, and laboured the good of my remotest relatives as well as those of my husband,—and if you could hear even still, how often he bemoans the inevitable wound which inexorable honour imposed, you would, if it could be possible, honour him yet more.”

“That is not possible,” exclaimed the overwhelmed Johanna.

Every body admitted this, yet every body tenderly pitied Mrs. Herbert. Floresco wished he had been killed instead of the colonel. “Blessed be my husband, and blessed be John Fitzorton!” said the bereaved Amelia, “God orders, it is ours to obey.”

She wept and bowed her head.

CHAPTER XXV.

JUSTIFIED by the inexorable laws of honour, which

‘Not the firm philosopher may scorn;’

acquitted, likewise, by the laws of the land, the author of Colonel Herbert’s death was still found guilty before that tribunal, at which he tried, with almost unexampled severity, every action of his life. “Dire and calamitous event,” would he often exclaim, as he surveyed her whom he had widowed; “and yet, if the husband I have robbed you of, had possessed a thousand lives, I must have been condemned to hazard a similar murder upon each, had the offence been repeated a thousand times. So imperious, alas! are the compacts of social men! We may deplore, but dare not violate them,”

Unhappy John! yet the angel which blushed at the death of Herbert, smiled on thy adoption of the orphan Johanna, and of

K 2 thy

thy protection of the mourning Amelia : nor shall thy generous sollicitude for the honour and happiness of Olivia,—innocent cause of many a bitter pang to thee,—be forgotten, where those good works which glorify the father, are treasured up and had in remembrance !

In truth, the care of Mrs. Herbert, and of Johanna, of Charles and Caroline Stuart, of Henry and Olivia Fitzorton, and the unwearied attention he paid to their several necessities, were the grand remedies which John made use of to mitigate the various incurable ills which afflicted his mind. They were not only as the cloudy pillar to conceal, even from himself, the darkness of his fate, but the pillar of fire, to give him at once light and strength in the way that he should go, even as if a heavenly-guide had gone before him.

We are, indeed, firmly persuaded, that, could those who are under heavy afflictions, from whatever cause, but especially from a strife of the passions, imitate John Fitzorton in their adversity, they would gain a temporary
refuge

refuge from themselves; and the return to their own state would be softened by the consciousness that the time of their trouble has been a period of comfort to those, whom, in the season of prosperity, they might have neglected. Thus would their sympathy be repaid by the oblivion which the exercise of social virtue throws over selfish sorrow.

Inflexibly fixed to his point, neither the sorrows of Henry, nor even the anxious wishes of Olivia, to explore the haunts of his fugitives, could prevail with John Fitzorton to share a secret, on the sanctity of which he believed was founded, not only the repose of his relatives at the castle, but of all the other objects of his care. Indeed, a case of the last necessity only, could have tempted him to draw any of the associated company from their peaceful retreat. The one which now presented itself he deemed to be of that kind. The unequivocal contrition of Sir Guise Stuart, was, he thought, a grand operation of conscience on the soul of man. He marked it as an important instance of the power of that wonder-working Providence

which can bring the most hardened hypocrite to repentance, break down all the apparently strong holds of prosperous vice, and convert the very shame and ruin of the guilty to the raising up of the innocent ; and, detestable as the very name of Sir Guise Stuart had been to John Fitzorton, even from his boyish days,—dupe of his dissimulations, as he had himself been, he now felt for him a sentiment of compassion, and a wish to save his life, for the purposes of more complete reformation ; and to deny his children the honest joy of becoming instrumental in that good work, he thought would be to withhold from them the rights of nature and the rewards of virtue.

While he was on his way to the Bury, he put into train a variety of important measures ; as a preliminary to which, he rested at an inn on the road, and wrote as follows, to True George ;

‘The bearer will conduct you to
JOHN FITZORTON.’

and while the messenger was gone, he employed

ployed himself in preparing letters to the parties concerned:

TO CHARLES STUART.

‘ Conscience wrings your father’s soul ; he is
 ‘ become a terrible example of parental guilt.
 ‘ It is for you to shew yourself one of filial
 ‘ piety. Follow the enclosed instructions
 ‘ whithersoever they conduct you. George
 ‘ will assist. Your father must needs be in
 ‘ a fit state for receiving the compassion of
 ‘ his children, when he finds a mediator in

JOHN FITZORTON.’

In a separate billet to the same person, he wrote,

‘ ASSOCIATE IN DISAPPOINTMENT !

‘ Attend not the summons, if yet an unruly
 ‘ sentiment remains in your bosom, if your
 ‘ whole heart is not yet in the government of
 ‘ my Johanna, whom as a balm to your wounds,
 ‘ I permitted you to cultivate ; but remember
 ‘ that I have no such balm to pour over
 ‘ my own wounds,—remember too, that
 ‘ you are now summoned to duties that en-
 ‘ large your virtues. O, forbear to narrow

• them! Olivia remains the happiest of
• wives:—our Henry devotes himself to
• her, and cannot be wretched; yet warned
• by a knowledge of his soft disposition,
• care will be taken to remove him from
• temptation. You, I hope, are to be trust-
• ed; if not, let your sister come alone,
• and bear away the honours which nature
• calls on you to share. But I injure you
• in the doubt. Forgive my unkindness;
• punish me by shewing how much my
• fears have wronged you. Perhaps I have
• argued on a consciousness of my own
• weakness,—come then, my friend, and give
• me strength.’

When George arrived, John exclaimed,
“ My opinion of your honesty is in-
cluded in my confidence: I entrust you
with the delivery of this packet to Charles
and Caroline Stuart, whose secret abode
you will see marked on the superscription.
You are a youth of action, and I need not
exhaust more time in words. I shall tell
Henry I have employed you.” The faith-
ful

ful George answered by an energetick nod, and followed his instructions.

CHAPTER XXVI.

NOTHING material for the reader to know happened to either of the travellers till they had reached the place of their respective destination. The interview of Colonel Fitzorton with Partington lasted several hours; for it was by far the most arduous part in the plan of the former to convince the latter that any thing like penitence could proceed from the heart of Sir Guise Stuart. Although John said, and with some reason, that if he was himself convinced in that point, every other person might be. “Depend upon it, yon insufferable scoundrel,” said the squire to John, “Sir Guise, is still a most honourable gentleman, and deserving every attention”—bowing—“the gallows can bestow; and you are again deceived by appearances, although you have taken it into your head to imagine that he is a good for nothing

scoundrel, who means what he says." At length, however, the colonel painted the forlorn condition of the Baronet so much to the heart of Partington, that he was brought to the crisis of the most abusive impatience, and execrated Le Maitre for not putting some things into his portmanteau, before the least mention had been made of a journey: called the groom and postillions caitiffs of the first order, for not coming round with the horses and carriage before any directions had been sent to the stables, and helping himself to prepare what he thought necessary; he in a manner forced refreshments down the throat of the colonel, crowded some wine and fruit into the chaise, and hurrying in John, he desired the rascals would make the most haste they could to Fitzorton castle: ordering Le Maitre to send a servant with the colonel's jaded horse, when he had been as well taken care of as his atrocious master.

On their arrival at the abbey, Partington seized upon Henry, after having expressed his joy at seeing him by a volley of kind
scur-

scurrilities, and then exclaimed, " You are all promise-breakers, and caitiffs—men, women, and children—none of you having kept your word, since your return from vagabondism, to make me a visit at the Bury. I have given you credit, for this debt, too long already, and now arrest the father and daughter, in my own name, and by virtue of my own supreme authority; and when I think fit to release them, will have the other two little villains; so take a short leave of one another, and to prison with you."

" Egregious John," said he, " will settle the rest; and take heed that we are off by break of day—a few radishes, mean while, and to bed.

Henry had, indeed, been long in visiting arrears with the worthy Partington, for whom he continued to feel the most sincere respect: and supposing that his friend had taken a journey to the Castle purely to fetch him, agreed to become his captive, and to be led to the Bury in the chains of friendship; and gained the consent of his wife, to

suffer little Caroline to be his companion; to which, on some previous hints from the colonel, she acceded. Partington, who conducted every project with all the ferment of his disposition, hardly suffered the dawn to shew itself, ere he aroused his culprits, as he called them, declaring, that “if they had not had their nap out, it might as well be finished in a chaise as in a bed, without loss of time or hindrance of business.”

While Partington was thus conveying away Henry and his daughter, his wife and son were the associates of John; the first care of whom was to make Olivia acquainted with part of the history of the Abbey Wanderers, and with True George’s embassy to them in their insulated recess. She applauded the part of the plot which had been assigned to Partington; and declared that for the high delight, which, she trusted in heaven, would, in the end, be offered to her Henry, in the sight of his bosom friend, she would forego his dear society, though it should continue for a whole week. “But, alas! there will be no time for preparations,
my

my dear colonel," said she, "it is impossible that the abbey can so soon be fit to receive the lovely Caroline. Could she not be here? The sudden sight of her sick unhappy father, even though endeared to her by returning virtue, will be too severe a trial. Let us then contrive how best to render these hard tasks supportable."

"All that will be taken care of," answered John.

He now instructed her in some other particulars of George's mission, and of the secluded party; still suppressing the share he had himself taken in their happy sequestration.

Olivia's generous heart, bounded with benevolent expectation; and, under the influence of such blessed feelings, she gave way to felicity that even called for the relief of tears.

Recollecting the adventure of Caroline's miniature, her joys were, however, dashed by apprehensions; and as John was about to leave the room, she caught his hand, and, in a sympathising voice, demanded
"whether

“whether his intrepid heart was armed to meet, unmoved, its most precious object?” for such, ever since the discovery of the picture, she had supposed Miss Stuart. “Pardon me, my dear good friend,” said she, in yet more consoling accents, “for adverting to a circumstance which my selfish transports had before absorbed; which I had, indeed, pledged myself no more to renew. But how can any of us be happy, if there exists any circumstance whereby you are made wretched? For although, perhaps, you may nobly labour to conceal the cause, I, who am, you know, in your heart’s secret—”

“I perceive,” answered John, “you have settled matters your own way; and so I here take off the embargo I had laid on this subject; for whatever I might assert concerning it, would probably be useless. Admitting the point alluded to possible, tho’, observe, I by no means own it, methinks, were it for the good of an object beloved, I could, at least I hope I could, live in the daily, hourly, sight of her, and not discover—a—a sentiment

ment—which might, if known, involve her in unavailing sorrow, or interrupt the performance of her domestic duties. The task, to be sure, would be difficult—but—surely—”

The broken sentences, and disjointed articulation which embarrassed John's speech, while the very object of such a sentiment was before his eyes, and the case actually his own, was naturally enough construed by Olivia, together with the release from her promise, into the effort of a noble mind struggling with a strong but inhibited passion; and, hereupon, feeling a real pity for the sufferer, she exerted every gentle power, of a sincere and tender friendship, to sooth him. She tried to cheer him with the hope of happier times; and at once applauded and honoured his conduct in the mean while.

These soothings, however, encreased John's emotions to a degree, that, after various conflicts with himself, and sometimes driven almost into a declaration that Caroline had never approached his heart, he suffered the idea to proceed;

proceed; and had, in a manner, but from the worthiest motive, encouraged it; but on Olivia's proceeding also in what she thought consolations—offering to his disappointed feelings, every balm that tender amity could devise—he became nearly suffocated with the repression of his real sensations; and was, at length, obliged to break away from her generous endearments. While she, on the other hand, considered his emotions as another resistless proof of his love for Caroline; and, therefore, looked upon him almost as great an object of her sympathy, as he really was. And in this mutual contention, it was alike difficult for both to nurse their agitated minds into composure.

But in a few hours after, John had turned, to so much advantage, one of his mind-restoring seclusions, that, as the last notice for dinner was sounded, Olivia observed him from her dressing-room window walking on the terrace, where he was soon after joined by his little nephew, and namesake, who was not more near than dear to him, and whom he caught

caught up in his arms, in which, the youth playfully struggling, a sort of loving strife ensued. This soon grew into a pitched battle: for the uncle going by retrograde steps, from the gravel path to the green sward, the nephew considered him as a retreating foe, and the uncle, giving into the fancy, suffered himself to be overtaken; but though he put himself into a posture of defence, he contrived to fall on receiving the first sportive blow. He then acknowledged himself completely vanquished, to the inexpressible delight of the little conqueror.

Olivia beheld this amicable contention, and trifling as it was in itself, she felt it to be full of importance, as it tended to restore her noble brother and friend to his wonted tranquillity. Availing herself of the auspicious moment, she hastily finished her dress, and descending into the garden joined the combatants, even while John the Great was yet stretched on the ground, and John the Little was proudly standing over him.

“O fie for shame!” exclaimed Olivia,

“what

“What generous victor ever triumphed over the fallen?”

“And a poor unarmed man too,” added the uncle.

The nephew seemed to feel the rebuke, in every fibre of his little frame. He blushed—held out both his hands—endeavoured to raise the captive—begging his mother’s assistance, and when they had mutually succeeded—the captive lending his secret endeavour at the same time—the conqueror assured his mother it was all “make-believe—but for all that,” said he, “if you had but seen how my uncle wanted to get the better of me, and when he found he could not—how he tried to pull me down after him—you would have said, that’s right Johnny, now you have him make the best of him.”

“This sally carried the frolic to its due point; John took his nephew’s hand and kissed it, in token of his looking on him as a generous foe; and then expressed his obligation to Olivia, for coming to see fair play.”

Thus

Thus the party formed at dinner a much more agreeable and harmonious trio, than the discordant notes, which had been heard at breakfast, seemed to promise.

CHAPTER XXVII.

RESUMING his benevolent employments for others, John again obliterated himself. There were various points, in bringing his plan to perfection, yet to be gained. The utmost circumspection was necessary, to apprise the characters of the drama, he was conducting, what each had to perform; lest a misunderstanding in the parts should confuse the whole. And to this end, a kind of general private rehearsal of the piece was requisite. His sagacious and active mind pondered on these matters, and he prepared, without imprudent delay, to take the executive direction.

The abbey emigrants, meanwhile, yielding obedience to the summons of John, under the sanction of father Arthur, in due time reached their first projected pausing place,
viz.

viz. the apartments of colonel Fitzorton, in London, where they were most dutifully received by their old servants, the Irwins; a circumstance which found its way to the hearts of their master and mistress. And the reciprocated gratulations on this occasion, shaded, as they were, with many sad remembrances, is more readily to be felt than described.

But Caroline's anxiety, respecting her father, broke through all obstructions, and she soon began to overwhelm Robert and his wife, and daughter, with interrogatories, from the pressure of which, guarded as they were by a previous lesson of caution, they would have found it impossible to escape, without discovery of more than was then mature for communication, had not the colonel made his appearance, in time to re-enforce their almost exhausted evasions. For True George had no sooner seen them safely escorted to the metropolis, than he set off with the news of their arrival to Fitzorton; and these tidings being imparted, almost with equal speed, by John to Olivia, the former hastened instantly to the

the apothecary in the possible chance of Sir Guise being sufficiently recovered to be conveyed to his children; "as there are," said the Colonel, "numberless good reasons why it would be more desirable to have the interview in London than in the country: and, indeed, any where rather than at the abbey or the castle: in which hope I have landed my groupe near the metropolis rather than the coast of Devonshire."

But every ray of such a hope was extinguished by the account which Burton gave of the Baronet's condition. "Alas!" sighed the good man, "the very fiends might commiserate him: his voice seems no longer of use but to groan, nor his eyes but to weep."

"Your own eyes, your own voice," said John, "too strongly prove the state you describe. Hasten then to him. Give him hope that his children may be found—but proceed with caution, while I endeavour to forward their interview, which must be at the abbey, I find, after all. Heaven will dispose the event."

"Re-

“Returning to Olivia,” he said, “I have scarcely a moment to bid you farewell.—Perhaps the life or death of our foul-goaded charge depends on my speedy journey to London, and as speedy return.”—“As for you, my poor fellow,” said he to George, who appeared to the sound of the bell, “if you wish to see a sinful man, in whose return to virtue you have been instrumental, receive pardon from the children he has wronged before he dies, you must enable me to begin my journey by taking care my post-chaise is at the door in half an hour; but as it may seem hard to hurry you away again so soon, you may let any of the other servants attend me; or, indeed, I can do very well with the driver, and you can follow when able.”

Within the space limited, however, short as it was, the assiduous lover of Jane, unwearied in good offices, obeyed his orders in regard to the chaise, and had equipped himself with a clean shirt and boots to attend it; allowing himself only time to look in upon his Jane;—to assure her he was alive, that he loved her, and that although he was, to be sure,

going out again on Mr. Col. Sir John's business, he would think of her all the way going and coming, till God willing, he might sit down and rest.

The space between the castle and place of rendezvous being in a manner barren ground, we shall pass to the latter, and represent, as satisfactorily as we are able, the meeting of John Fitzorton, and his friends. It had even more of interest for his heart than he expected; for Mrs. Herbert and Johanna were of the party. The moment he entered, Johanna was at the feet of her second father, whose honoured hand she impressed with many a kiss, and bathed with many a tear.—Caroline would have followed her example, but that she was prevented by the impetuous emotions of Charles, who insisted on his sharing the embraces of their guardian friend. Father Arthur would have bent that knee, which had hitherto bowed only to God, had not the extravagant wildness of joy that suddenly seized Floresco, at beholding the man of whom he had constantly heard so much, divided his attention; while Mrs. Herbert testified

testified her sensations, even as the Colonel manifested his own, by an eloquent silence that spoke the language of the soul.

“Be not surprized, Sir,” said Caroline, who first found a voice, “at seeing almost the whole family. We were twined together too fondly for separation. It was with difficulty we prevailed on the aged Dennison to remain at the recess, each asserting an equal right to shew their duty and their love.”

“Not equally,” said Johanna ardently, as John raised her to his arms—“not equally! Mine surpasses every other claim.”

“Ah! can it exceed that of Charles and his sister,” said Caroline, who are to owe to him a renewed father?—“O! generous, generous, friend! where is he?—what is his present state?—forgive, forgive, our impatience!—does he live?—is there a hope?—dare we tell our terrified, yet delighted, hearts.”—

“Tell them every thing,” answered the Colonel, “that filial love, corrected by devotion should most desire.—If your father recovers he will live I trust to virtue; and if he

dies, his penitence, though short and late, will be carried by the angel of truth to the throne of mercy. I revere your eagerness, sweet maid, too much to check it.—Our friend George, whose heart is in our concerns, and who I have, therefore, admitted into our confidence, will now follow such instructions as he received on the road; and trusting that you will place yourselves, with father Arthur's permission, under my government, I dare to promise you shall hear the penitent sighs, and feel the conscious tears of Sir Guise Stuart ere it be long. Dear and subtle as has been his hypocrisy, the hour of truth is come."

"Follow him, in all things, my children," exclaimed Arthur.

The brother and sister promised the most implicit obedience. The Indian, who had sometimes on tiptoe-step advanced close to him to devour up every word, and sometimes retreated at awful distance, now hastily approached, and passed his trembling hand along the arm of John as if to see whether he was indeed mortal.—Johanna could not restrain her frequent homage.—Mrs. Herbert

kissed the hand which had made her a mourning widow—and True George had vanished like lightning at the first hint of his master, wishing with all his soul, that instead of affixing harness to the horses he could have hung wings.

Previous, however, to their departure the Colonel held a conference with Mrs. Irwin and Patty: “May I depend,” said John, “that Robert has strictly observed my directions in regard to what was to be done at the abbey, and how the business was to be conducted? I know he received my orders, but did he understand them?”—“I am sure,” said Patty, curtsying, “my dear father will do every thing just as your honour ordered him; for tears were in his poor eyes at the thoughts of doing any thing again to serve his good young master and mistress.”

John returned well pleased to his associates—True George soon came to announce the carriages at the door, and when John had filled them as he thought proper, the journey began.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

“HAVE you taught our Johanna,” questioned the Colonel, “amongst other good things, Mrs. Herbert, the important duty of placing any thing trusted in the most sacred foldings of her heart?—have you strengthened her mind to reject a confidence while it *can* be refused?—to receive it with regret even when it cannot be with-held?—to retain it with unbetraying sanctity when it has been received?”

As Mrs. Herbert was about to reply, John perused the countenance of Johanna, and then continued his discourse:—“Although I am not in the habit of reading human hearts through human faces, nor, in truth, of believing eyes or lips either, I will, for once, give credit to the honour that seems to mark the features of this young woman.”—“Your place of repose,” observed he, “must in the first instance be at the castle, from which Henry Fitzorton is absent.—Our Olivia will be prepared to receive you.—Indeed little

preparation will be necessary; her heart is the asylum of ready hospitality—besides ye are not altogether strangers to one another, and her guests will be her friends. But should any of our fellow-travellers, either in the spirit of friendship or folly, have imparted to you, Johanna, any family secrets, of which you may imagine the knowledge might too much affect or interest Olivia, I expect you will give me an instance of your discretion by guarding them in your own bosom.”

“Does my face still answer for me, my reverend protector, or must I use, another language?”

“I am satisfied with its reply,” said John: “and though I have never taken any man, or any woman’s, affirmation on such trust since”—Here John stopped, sighed, and, with tears in his eyes, left a chasm in his sentence—to be filled by every reader with the name of Johanna’s mother.—

“Yes,” resumed John, “I am as perfectly satisfied, dear girl, as if you had sworn a thousand oaths—as if I had tried your fidelity by the test of a thousand years.” “Your

charge," continued he, addressing Mrs. Herbert, "is grown very lovely—I am of opinion too, with Charles Stuart, that her beauty resembles that of our Olivia—Possibly the lieutenant may have mentioned this—Yes, I perceive he has."

As John threw a scrutinizing look on Johanna her responsive features gave in an evidence so rosy, that he exclaimed—"For once I have been a true physiognomist.—Unless perfectly convenient, Johanna, to your feelings, it will henceforth be perfectly unnecessary to answer by words any question I may put to you—they would be mere repetitions."

"So the lieutenant has often told her," said Mrs. Herbert.

"Has he?" questioned John, "well then no more need be said about it."

John perceived the crimson accumulate in the cheeks of Johanna, and relieving her by observing, that he considered the lieutenant to be, at least, as good a physiognomist as himself, changed the subject.

The residue of the journey was undistinguished by further matters, requisite to its history, till they came to the last stage at a town about fifteen miles from Fitzorton.— Here John proposed a change of companions, taking Charles Stuart in the place of Mrs. Herbert and Johanna, with whom he had before associated himself. George was now sent forward with a letter to Olivia, announcing her new guests—and while the horses were changing at the door a waggon stopped, and the company soon ascertained the waggoner to be Robert Irwin.

“ If you are come from the abbey, tell us,” exclaimed Caroline, “ how you left my father ?”

“ In as fair a way, my lady, as he can go.”

“ Blessed be God !”

“ Yes, blessed be God indeed ! for none but he could have put him there—I know that by myself, my lady.”

“ Put him where, Robert ?”

“ Why in a fair way of recovery.—Yes, miss, of recovering his soul, and mayhap his body also : though he does not seem much
to

to care now what becomes of that, so as it will serve to hold his soul in it till he sees your honours."

"Have you seen him then?"

"O yes, blessed be God for that too! I would not but have seen him for all the worth of the abbey. He knew me at sight, took me by the hand, and then asked my pardon, so then I asked his, and he said, I had done his soul good, and I told him, he had done mine full as much; so we thanked one another; and if Mr. Burton had not been in a hurry to get me away with this bit of a letter to the colonel Sir John, I should have talked longer with his honour."

"You have talked too long," said the colonel, who had been some time in fear of Robert's loquacity.

"Thank heaven, the horses are ready," exclaimed Caroline, handing Johanna and Mrs. Herbert into one of the chaises, and hurrying the rest. Seeing John, however, open the letter, she paused while ascending the carriage to cast an enquiring look on the colonel.

“It is from a friend of Sir Guise,” said John, in reply to the look, “from, indeed, every body’s friend;—our good apothecary, who writes, that all is as well as can be expected.”

The travellers, a good deal relieved, pursued their journey.

When the colonel and the lieutenant were shut up together, the former spake as follows. “Your forming one of the party is a sufficient reply to the improper doubts of my letter; yet, the frequent sight of an object, of which our frail nature is in danger, and yet, whom a complicated duty places in our view, is a task which your virtue has been spared, my friend. But some persons who have endured absence with philosophy, have found every energy melt away on a return to the object which had before enthralled them. If you apprehend this may be your case, as much caution should be observed to prevent an interview between you and Olivia, as there has been taken to hinder the meeting of Henry and Caroline: and so environed indeed, is the

the path we are all going, that could I have brought your repentant, and perhaps, dying parent, to his children, I would have appointed the interview at the distance of the poles, rather than on the spot to which we are hastening. Let not, however, the necessity I am under, of thus leading you into temptation, be augmented by your own indiscretion. The abbey is sufficiently separated from the castle to stand betwixt your weakness and your strength, if any of the former remains: and when your duty is fulfilled at the one, the honours you have thereby acquired may be preserved untarnished by returning to your recess, or to more active scenes, which, in truth, you have but too much and too long neglected. We err as fatally, my friend, from having too proud as too humble an opinion of our virtues: and from too great as too little confidence in ourselves."

"If," replied the lieutenant, "I have to boast of any strength on this occasion, it is not my own;—and, did I not fear you would accuse me of inconstancy, I could

satisfy you that, although I am now moving on trembling ground, I advance with nerves that can no longer shake, with a heart that no longer palpitates:—but second impressions are deemed so slight, so faithless, even by the romantic—”

“By the romantic they may,” interposed John Fitzorton, “yet those who are at all conversant with the powers of circumstance, of time, and chance, operating on humanity, will pronounce the possibility at least of second impressions taking firm root in a steady heart: nay, of their being more cogent than the first; and although this may trample on the laws which romance has imposed on caricature-loving fancy, it is within the boundary of nature.”

Charles acknowledged that he felt relieved on a subject he had not dared to open.

“You should not only have dared to disclose, but have sent both your friends at the castle, the earliest confidential accounts of it, and correct; and did I not enter into the motives of your suppression, imputing them to a sincere, yet false pity for Henry and myself,
I should

I should assert you had used us most unkindly : since to with-hold a good example is to with-hold, often, the means of virtue. And yet, possibly, it might have been lost on us : for there is no making human beings reach, or attempt to reach, similar ends by similar means. I have endeavoured with unceasing diligence to wean my affections, and have been elaborating a lover's cares for every thing I saw that deserved attention, from the glow-worm at my feet, to the lark at the extent of my vision,—and to divide my heart amongst all the gradations of intermediate beings, till I could absorb the one which had so long annihilated the rest ; but finding that all other parts of nature had less congenial magic for my heart, than the attractive particles that constituted that one, I could at best only take care that the several objects on whom I employed myself were the better. And thus, were our separate confessions made known to the world, both our characters would fade in the page of romance : yet without appealing, my friend, either to writers or readers, let us

do justice to ourselves. It pleased heaven to set in the eye of your constant remark, an object sufficiently beautiful and good to draw you imperceptibly to itself; and though I have not had the same advantage, the heaven by which you have been favoured, has so far extended its bounty to me, that if I continue to think more highly, perhaps more tenderly of Olivia, than of any other woman; it is tenderness I have directed every way to her honour and happiness; and although I admit this furnishes no instance of victorious energy, it offers to a heart beset by temptations from which it could not escape, the only innocent mode of consolation; and, O! forgive me, sacred source of my life, if in this despairing hour,—after many a year of unavailing effort,—forgive me, spirit of my father! if I observe, but with fond remembrance of all thy virtues, that the still agonized hearts of thy children, supply to parents a lesson of awful caution!”

“With regard to myself,” observed the lieutenant, “all merit is precluded by the very circumstances which have enabled me
to

to transfer an unfortunate to a happy choice. The steady example of my dearest sister, who, without affecting to have gained a sudden or easy conquest over herself, preserved a silence, which, in my presence, was seldom broken, even by a sigh; her patient submission to destroying languors which have, as you must have noticed, invaded her frame"——

"I observed it," said the colonel.

"The care she took to extend an example, not of obdurate philosophy, nor yet of hypocritical indifference, but of chaste resignation; her unfeigned regrets and prayers for her father, while she knew him unworthy of the name;—this, my dear colonel, in the first instance endued me with a patience greater than my own. Thus, from a female, and one of the tenderest of her sex, has a soldier learned to suffer. The sweet Johanna, meanwhile, at once kept alive, while she was imperceptibly subduing an unfortunate passion. Nature had given to her features a similitude, which——"

"But,"

“But,” interposed John, strongly, “unless it should turn out that you can love Johanna for herself, independent on all comparison, she never must be yours: for I must not have her secondary in her husband’s eyes, even to Olivia.”

“Secondary! ah, she is the first and dearest to my soul!”

“Perhaps, however,” answered John, “it may be as well after all, that Mrs. Fitzorton and you should meet; for let romancers say what they will, I have seen many instances, and experienced one, where a second love has effaced, improved, and obliterated the first: I have likewise known both men and women imagine themselves in love much oftener than they are; and Johanna must never condescend to become a substitute; neither am I yet sufficiently acquainted with the particulars of the passion to sanction it; but I love you both.”

The lieutenant bowing gratefully, turned the discourse by making enquiries as to the state of his friend Henry’s affections, “which

I cannot but hope," said he, "are as completely transferred to Olivia, as are mine to my dearest Johanna."

"His conduct is meritorious," answered the colonel, "but it will be best to keep him from unnecessary trials,—and therefore, when the fate of your father is determined, which, to deal candidly with you, I think an almost immediate event: the return of your whole party either to your former recess or to some other, must by no means be retarded. For you, indeed, Charles, whatever may be the issue of your wishes towards an alliance with Johanna, I think a more active scene might be adopted. Alas! my friend, both you and our Henry have been too long idle.—In that respect, my plan, under at least an equal difficulty, has been better contrived. I have found or made time for the performance of official duties of very different kinds: and though, alas! I performed them often amidst the wailings of humanity, and the throbbings of my heart, I determined they should be done, and that

that they should contribute to my private relief, while they effected, I trust, some public good. But Charles Stuart is still a subaltern, and Henry Fitzorton carries about a mind which by long habit of indulged softness is unfitted for exertion, and instead of being eminent as a divine, and celebrated as a poet, his noblest effusions, even in his occasional attempts to preserve the character of the latter, sink to a querulous elegy that moans his own disappointments, or dwindles to a sonnet that veils in an address to Delia, or Cleone, his inextinguishable passion for the real, though involuntary object of his heart."

"I thought," said the lieutenant, "you had pronounced his conduct meritorious."

"As a husband, as a father, he is irreproachable: but as a man, he has no character at all. It has evaporated in sighs and tears. I too have sighed. I too have wept, but I have not forgotten that I had engaged in public employments."

"Alas!"

“Alas!” answered Charles, “my Henry is not, by nature, endued with the strength of John.”

“And what,” replied the colonel, “is John’s strength? rather say, that he has taken a less perilous mode of nursing his weakness. Perhaps, my friend, we are all equally wrong to have felt any weakness at all: and as passion wounded us, reason should make us whole. But the best efforts do not always measure to duty,—rather let us utter a prayer that——”

The colonel was proceeding in these reflections, when the postillion stopped the chaise to give notice he was within a mile of the place; and while he was speaking, True George came up to “assure their honours, that the lady Olivia would be ready to receive all the worshipful good company.”

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE gate which the colonel had marked as the first point of direction, stood on the side of the road, which all the party must necessarily pass; and just as the chaises, containing the ladies intended to be the castle guests, were drawing up to it, the midnight moon presented to view not only the castle itself, but a much nearer prospect of its lovely mistress. The fair hostess, anxious to give to hospitality its most attractive grace, had ventured, through the dews of night, near a quarter of a mile, in complete oblivion of herself, and attended only by the faithful Jane, to offer the warmest welcome of her bounteous heart.

And difficult would it be to find words suitable to the short, but interesting, events which her courtesy produced. Every glass was, in a moment, let down—every door thrown open—every carriage was emptied—and every affectionate and grateful expression was given and received. “O that I had power

power to tell you," exclaimed Olivia, "how welcome you all—all are! and how I envy myself the miserly joy of receiving you, for the present, alone; my dear husband being, as doubtless you have heard, from home; but, I trust, we shall have him amongst us soon, and meet to part no more."

While she uttered this address, in a voice that mingled the music of an affectionate heart with every word, she distributed her caressing hands to each of the party. She said the kindest things to Charles. Caroline she embraced many times—and, although this was her fondest point of friendship, neither Johanna, nor Mrs. Herbert, nor the good Monk, nor Floresco, had cause to be jealous of a preference; and she earnestly desired that the castle might be honoured by all present, at least for that night."

"This is against all rules, all plans, all reason," said John, "nay all promises, and what is worse, the fair promise-breaker has made it impossible to chide, even though she is betraying us."

"Ah! forgive—forgive me, my dear brother,"

brother," said Olivia, " my emotions are too strong to be contained."

Whatever were the particular and appropriate sensations of each individual, on this sudden rencounter, there was no time for explaining them. John hardly allowed opportunity for the exchange of general courtesies: the meeting and separating were alike abrupt; and under cover of this hurry in their movements, and the shading of the moon light on their features, the secrets of every heart were commodiously veiled.

A short conversation now taking place, a little farther in the park, betwixt John and Olivia, the former wreathed the arms of Mrs. Herbert and Johanna, within those of Mrs. Fitzorton, and desiring George and Jane to take care of one another, that division of the party went forward to the castle, while John's party returned to their carriage and proceeded to the abbey.

The urbanity of Mrs. Fitzorton, however, was felt and acknowledged; after which a profound silence prevailed; broken only
by

by an impatient wish from Caroline that they had gained the end of their journey.

Agreeable to the colonel's instructions, the carriages stopped at a stile that led through a coppice, to that grand avenue, already so eventful in this history. And while John was charging the post-boys to remain till the steward, meaning True George, returned; that dispatchful youth came, with almost winged speed, to inform the colonel he had seen the ladies safe into the castle. "Remain then with your horses," said John to the postillions, "till this young man, who must attend us, gets back to you from the place to which we are going. There is a possibility we all may return with you; but, whether we do or no, I rely on your being found here till you hear from, or see us again."

The party now passed through the grove, led by John Fitzorton, and followed by True George; and they came into the avenue, at the very spot where Henry first betrayed his heart. The abbey clock struck one in the morning, and was almost immediately answered

swered by that of Fitzorton, and the Chapel house.

‘As if an angel spoke they felt the solemn sound.’

Arriving at the lodge, that divided the park from the back garden, over which, as if to welcome, by a light from heaven, the angel-like train returned, the moon cast a ray so pure and clear that every object became distinct. Hereupon, several sighs broke involuntarily from the party, but in so mingled a sound that it would have been difficult to appropriate them. Arthur, however, as he passed the portal, which George held open, exclaimed, “Blessed be our entrance into that well-known mansion!” “Amen,” added the little Floresco, dropping on his knee and raising his arms. Charles and Caroline were supported, indeed almost carried, by colonel Fitzorton. The brother’s feet faltered at every step; the sister’s trembling limbs claimed the support which

which even the firm frame of John could ill bestow; but the generous Burton, from his appointed station in the summer pavilion, marked by many an indelible record, hastened to their relief. "My patient is not yet dead," exclaimed the worthy man, willing to remove a fear which his precipitate appearance might occasion. "Not yet!" exclaimed Caroline, "then he is dying—!" and without waiting a reply, she ran towards the house with a speed as if proceeding from a renovation of nature. Alas! it was but the exertion of one of those moments, in which it is sometimes permitted to the immortal soul, to assert its independence over the mortal body, and to mount with an energy sublime over every exhausted power of our common nature. At the foot of the abbey door she was saved from falling, in a manner lifeless, on the edge of the marble steps, only by the little Indian; whose ready humanity outshone that of his companions. "Pray, good dear lady, forgive poor negro

gro boy, for him boldness in touching you with black hand—but only till white maffers come up.” The generous and timid youth resigned her to the arms of her brother and the colonel, the instant they arrived. True George softly opened the abbey door, to follow his master’s instructions, and ran to fummon thofe whom the colonel had appointed to receive the guefts; and when Caroline recovered, ſhe obſerved, in the perſons of the females who had been buſied in reſtoring her, two of the ſervants who had conducted themſelves moſt to her ſatisfaction, both before and after the death of her mother.

CHAPTER XXX.

IN vain, however, did theſe faithful adherents, and the generous John Fitzorton, who had fought for, and provided them—in vain did the tender Charles, and the pious Arthur, counſel our Britiſh daughter to take a few hours of repoſe before ſhe had ſeen her father.

father. It was not without difficulty the good apothecary could prevail on her to go, and see whether her visit might be proper—"It must, it must, be proper," cried she, "let us go, my brother, the sight of us must calm, may perhaps restore, him." "It may be even dangerous," observed John. "Perchance fatal," added Mr. Burton, and went forward. Caroline turned even paler than before, and remained in terrified suspense till the return of the apothecary, who brought the comforting tidings, that both himself and the nurse, were in profound repose. "O! conduct me to him," exclaimed Caroline, catching the reporter's hand—"my steps, my very breathing shall not be heard—for pity's sake let me see the state he is in, and I will be satisfied—indeed I will."

Her appeals were not to be withstood—with the lightness of the air itself she no sooner received permission, and understood where her father was reposing, than she moved to the chamber, the door of which being half open she reached the foot of the bed unper-

ceived. The day had been sultry, and the curtains were undrawn.

Ye who have ever beheld the parent whom ye left in vigorous health of body, though covered with crimes of the foul, and to whom filial piety has brought you, after sharp remorse has made that mind its victim, and sickness has almost devoured that body, ah! recal the sensation of your hearts at the sight of a father under these circumstances—then will you have a just image of Caroline on the first view of the deeply-changed Sir Guise Stuart! It is true that she saw him sleeping, but she saw the wildness of despair entrenched in the untimely furrows of a face, colourless and shrunk as death itself—she observed the symptoms of unquiet rest in the catch of the features, and the starts of the whole frame; his eyes too, opened and closed abruptly: but at length, his countenance settling more regularly, she went round to the side of the bed, and bending over his pillow remained in that posture some moments.

Fearful of disturbing him, and yet more
afraid

afraid of the effects of a surprize should he awake and perceive her unprepared, she trusted not the meltings of her pitying heart with a voice, scarcely with a sigh—but, after having for some time hung over him, the tears which furcharged her eyes dropt on his pale cheek, and following each other fast before she was conscious where they had fallen, she was wiping them gently away, when his eye half unfolded met those of his daughter.

“O, God! O, God!” groaned he, “there then is one of them—but it cannot be she—no—those lips will never return my curse.”—

“Ah, no, no,” exclaimed she, dropping on her knees, and folding her upraised hands—

“never, never! she is come to bless you—to crave *your* blessing—to nurse you into health—into felicity—into an assurance of eternal duty—eternal love!—eternal happiness!”

“And your son is come with her,” answered Charles.

John Fitzorton, Father Arthur, and the
M 2 little

little Indian, had stolen, under the guidance of the apothecary, unseen into the chamber.

“Yes, we are all come, Sir Guise, to bless you,” said the Colonel, “because we hope and believe you continue to deserve it!”

“And to intercede with the all-merciful to grant you *his* benediction also,” cried Arthur, kneeling at the foot of the bed.

Floresco imitated him in a remote corner of the apartment—George standing meanwhile at the door, but wrapt in purest contemplation.

The sick man laboured to hold himself half-raised, while he stretched forth his hand, and bowed his head to John Fitzorton—saying eagerly, but feebly—“This, under God! is your work, sir. I—I—I thank you. You are just come in time, my children, to see the death, alas! of a sinner, but of a penitent.”

“Yet of that death the all-merciful is not desirous,” said Arthur.

“And if you will try to compose yourself, sir,” said Burton, “your children and friends,

friends, after a weary journey, will rest themselves also : and when I assure both them and you, sir, that this is necessary to your life and their happiness, all parties will, surely, submit to my direction."

Sir Guise, unable to speak from the fulness of sensation, bowed assent to whatever should be thought proper : then laid his head on the pillow, but kept his eyes in a fixed gaze on his children.

On a whispered promise from the apothecary to be again admitted when her father was refreshed, and to be summoned if any thing should happen, Caroline was prevailed on to leave the room with the rest of her friends, and afterwards, being indeed worn down with fatigues both of mind and body, and understanding the rest were properly accommodated, she suffered herself to be conducted to her sleeping-room by the other female attendant : Arthur went to the good apothecary's, accompanied by his Indian ; and the lieutenant, though he had hitherto deported himself with the utmost decorum, seemed doubtful whether he should go to the

various claims which attracted him at the castle, or listen only to the single duty that fastened upon him at the abbey. John left him to his own election. "You will say every thing most good, most dear, for me, Colonel," sighed he after a short pause, "where you are going; I feel that I ought to remain here for the night." "I believe you are right," cried John. "It is already near the day; all, I hope, are at rest in the castle; and, to tell you the truth, my friend, my thoughts and feelings have been so long upon the stretch, that I shall be glad of a little sleep too: you see matters have turned out so that it would be a heart-breaking effort to drag your sister from her father so soon, though we leave him so much better than might be expected. We must give up, therefore, the idea of returning to town with the chaises—George must go round, and dispose them, late as it is, at Fitzorton, but with proper cautions, and, in the course of to-morrow, or more correctly speaking, of to-day, let us hope all the good proposed by my long, and your yet longer, journey, may be accom-

accomplished: we may then get back to London, without hazard of curiosity carrying our adventure, at least in a suspicious shape, to my brother Henry:—Lieutenant, farewell.”

Charles and the Colonel shook hands, and the latter, with the ever-active George, took their circuitous route to the castle.

George had not uttered a single word during the sacred interview of the father and children, although he had wept and smiled, kneeled down, and leapt up, according as grief, or joy, reverence, or activity, operated on his impressible nature. Finding himself now only with the Colonel, or, perhaps, forgetting a moment that he was so, an exclamation burst from him, which induced John to ask him what was the matter? “Why I was thinking, your honour, that if poor Sir Guise went on every day getting a little better and better all ways, he would be good enough in time for one that he has used the worst, though she is one of the best, to see him too, and beg of God to bless him before he dies, as well as the rest. She’ll forgive him I’m sure.”

sure. Lord help us, your honour, so little while as we be in this world, and so long in another, that is to say for everlasting, none but a fool, one would think, would be wicked: and yet, for my part, it seems to me that the more sensible the more sinful. Lord help us, saving your honour's presence, we are all of us a pack of poor little things."

The Colonel took George's arm and put it within his own, and notwithstanding the timid reluctance of Jane's lover, who would reverentially have withdrawn it, John walked in that endearing way till he came to the postillions, both of whom were shut up fast asleep in their chaises, while the horses silently followed their drivers' example as to napping, with their heads nodding, and noses bent almost to the ground, only one of them was cropping twigs from the green hedge near which they had drawn up.

Familiar, however, to every sudden summons, they were easily aroused—George had brought, out of pure good nature, both man and beast some refreshments from stable and pantry,

pantry, on his return from escorting the ladies, and whispering that a second part of the same tune now awaited them at the castle, they were not only awake but on their horses in an instant. The Colonel crossed the corner of the park on foot, leaving the post-boys to the discretion of George, and when he heard from the servant, who sat up for him, that the ladies were but just gone to their rooms, he tapped at Olivia's chamber door in passing to his own, simply to say all's well, and went into his apartment.

"We are all visible," cried Olivia opening her door, and tripping into the gallery that parted off the chambers—"Do pray tell us how you found poor Sir Guise," exclaimed Mrs. Herbert, following Olivia's example—"And how sweet Caroline, our Caroline, dear John, how did she bear the meeting?" continued Mrs. Fitzorton—"And how did my honoured patron leave the—the—the lieutenant?" sighed Johanna—"but, perhaps, he is come, that is, perhaps,—*All well!*" repeated John from his citadel, and then drew another bolt across his door.

"I suppose you know, ladies, that shuts out all further arguments," said Olivia playfully: "we shall not get another word from him to-night, though we were to die for it—so as 'all's well' we must be contented."

They wished John, cordially, a good night, notwithstanding his neglect of minute gallantry, and, embracing each other, returned to their chambers.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE morning greetings, however, atoned for the deficiencies of the farewell negative. The Colonel joined them at early breakfast, and while they were yet partaking, and conversing over it, with those renewed spirits which temporary death returning to blameless life generally bestows, several little agreeable events happened in succession. The indefatigable apothecary paying his morning devoir, and said that the trusty Jonathan, who had been the watch of the night, had with giant strides already given in a favourable report of his patient, that Jerom had relieved guard

at the fourth hour, and that therefore the good fellow thought it best to take the news to Brixham before he went to rest. "You must know, ladies," said Burton, "Jonathan thought we should all sleep the better after it"—My Sally overheard this account, for the giant has a marvellous good voice, and though she was yet in bed, she cried out to her sister,—who is her bed-fellow:—Do you hear that, Hester? God bless the bearer. Yes, so say I, God bless Jerom for that, cries Hester, waking.

"Aye, you have been dreaming about my Jerom, I suppose," answered Sally, "but the news happens to be brought by my Jonathan." "Well, don't quarrel about it," vollied Jonathan, "there's my pretty lassies, cousin Jerom shall bring the next account, and then we shall expect a kiss a-piece and double it." This produced a hearty laugh both above and below stairs. I skipped up and made dear oldish wife laugh too—the giant then tucked him in a truckle in the back parlour, where, as I may say, he and Jerom ride and tie in sleep, as they take
M 6 turn

turn and turn, as Sir Guise's nursery men, as I call them;—the girls got his mefs of milk ready by the time he waked, wife took t'other nap, and here am I come for my cup of comfort, and slice of conversation. But odso, time will not stop a moment, although we are often enough obliged to wait years for him,—that is, for the merry-time,—so as your faces have declared the state of your pulses, my good friends—

“O yes,” interposed John, as Burton was going round, “as *all's well*, no more need be said on the subject.”

The ladies interpreted the arch look to which the *all's well* applied, and laugh'd almost as much as the apothecary's daughters, and the giant: and then Burton, the best natured of living beings, joined in chorus, without having any other reason for it than the genuine joy he had in seeing his friends joyful. He then set off to visit Olivia's cottages in his way to the abbey.

These diurnal journeys were always performed on his medical pad, who, as brisk and bonny as himself, and perfectly acquainted

quainted with the doctor's language, trotted, cantered, or set off full gallop, according to the calls of life and death, or only the gentle indispositions, or the megrims of a patient. Indeed, it was a sort of a parish-poney, for all the little boys and girls within ten miles of Brixham had been upon its back, and sometimes two or three of them together; when the good man was visiting a father or mother, the children of the family, or a little neighbour would have a ride on the doctor's pad, so that the poor little fellow had as much employment, and got no more rest than his master. The urchins would take him from the gate, hedge, door, or manger to which he might be fastened, and hurry away with him sometimes in the middle of a nap; now and then, it must be owned, the youngsters would lead him into a clover-field, meadow grounds, or conduct him even into the garden to graze on the sward of the walks, or grass-plats; and sometimes they would purloin the oats from the corn-bin, and the hay from the stacks, and so reward him for their pastime; while
a few

a few generously took delight to see him at feed, without mounting his back; and sometimes too the apothecary would receive him at their officious hands, wantonly bedecked with flowers wreathed in his mane, or braided into his tail; Burton accustomed to their sport, and always pleased with it, would then distribute some of the nuts, plumbs, or apples, with which his pockets were usually furcharged, and then man and beast would set off to the next on the sick list, whether in town, hamlet, fine house, or humble hut.

Scarce had the apothecary reached his first pausing place, ere a packet was delivered to Mrs. Fitzorton, who with extatick accents, cried out, almost the moment of receiving it,—“From my dear, dear Henry!”—She bowed for permission to read, and was opening the letter while she bowed. Her satisfied heart panted to communicate, and John auguring from her happiness, that *all was well* too in that quarter, did not check her. “You know all about Henry,—only hear,”

hear," said she, proceeding immediately with the contents.

‘ Although, my dearest Olivia, I have
‘ thus been trepanned by the kidnapper Par-
‘ tington, who has been abusing me ever
‘ since I became his prisoner,—I expect he
‘ will be tired of calling me names, in a week
‘ or two at most, when I will fly to her
‘ whose happiness is the sole study of my
‘ life. Let me hear from you I intreat.
‘ Were not our dear Johns, both little and
‘ great, your inmates, I should really be angry
‘ with mine host for stealing me away at this
‘ crisis of your tender and interesting expecta-
‘ tions. Dear Carry is well, and sends love :
‘ Gaffer and Gammer Atwood the same :
‘ Jonathan and Jerom are from home ;
‘ we suppose with their sweet-hearts at the
‘ apothecary’s. Again, and again, adieu.’
‘ Partington scolds for himself.’

“ You are, perhaps, unacquainted with Mr. Partington’s humour, and might therefore think him,” said Mrs. Fitzorton, “ one of the
the

the most ill-mannered men in the world, whereas, he is one of the most friendly, and most blameless, and only scolds those whom he loves."

"We have often heard of him," said Mrs. Herbert. Olivia then gave to their perusal the following curious postscript to Henry's letter.

' DEAR ABOMINABLE !

' Your good-for-nothing husband can
' scarcely be with-held from leaving me
' already. I must have him chained, like
' other puppies, to prevent his running
' home before I have done with him;—
' and the young villain his daughter begins
' to whimper after mammy too,—I will
' tie the rascal by the leg, as I would
' a singing bird.—But, after all, you are
' the most atrocious caitiff for witching
' them away. Dissolve your spells, or use
' them to bind the refractory fellow to
' this spot, till I am weary of him, which,
' as he rightly says, I shall soon be, or else
' I'll

‘ I’ll have you burned witch-fashion. Your’s,
‘ as you deport yourself.’

‘ B. PARTINGTON.’

“ The gentleman is a humourist,” cried Mrs. Herbert, smiling.

“ Surely it is very unnatural,” said Johanna, “ to abuse one’s best friends.”

“ Perhaps, you would think it more so to hear him lavish praise on his worst enemies,” observed Olivia, “ which he does invariably.”

“ That is more unnatural still,” exclaimed Johanna.

“ Not, my little wonderer,” said the colonel, “ if you were to see the look, and hear the voice in which he addresses both.”

“ Still ’tis unnatural,” added Johanna.

“ Rather say it is singular, for ’tis in nature, I assure you: we are very apt,” remarked Olivia, “ to call that unnatural, which never came within our observation.—O, but here’s a little nota-bene for you, Colonel.”

Being in the letter to Olivia, John knew it might be read aloud. He therefore heard what

what follows.—‘Tell the insufferable Colonel John, to take heed—fat: sap:—a word to foolish fellows is enough.’

“O, but if you knew,” said John, warmly, “as we know this scurrilous being!—if you knew that he hath in his heart no enmity but for vice, no friendship but for virtue: that his oaths are asperities on the surface, and seem like small knots on the bark of the oak, mere idle peeling, but the heart is sound and good to the bottom,—you would think of, and love him as we do.”

“I love him in your report,” said Mrs. Herbert.

“Pray, dear sir,” questioned Johanna, “do you think there is any chance that I shall come in for a share of his scurrility?”

“If you go on improving, I think you may hope,” answered John.

“O yes, depend on it,” observed Mrs. Fitzorton, “you will be one of his most abominable little caitiffs.”

This sort of chat went on for some time, and those who sustained it were thereby more familiarized

familiarized and endeared to each other. It was then proposed that while Olivia withdrew to write to Henry, Little John and Jane Atwood should shew the park and gardens to her amiable guests; the colonel having signified his intention to ride to the abbey, after he had settled some business with his privy counsellor True George.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE morning so generally chearful in the Castle, took a different colour at the Abbey: the passing hours there had reflected many hues. It was there, indeed, as an April morn, in which a sudden but soft succession of cloudings, and sun-beams—of light showers, with now a dark shadow, and now a vivid ray, alternately cleared and obscured the face of things.

Bright, however, was the beam that, at early dawn, visited the chamber of Caroline Stuart; for it was ushered in by tidings that her father had passed a better night than any he had enjoyed for many weeks:
and

and that he was still in the arms of sleep, guarded by Jerom, the nurse, and one of the female attendants.

Cheared by this intelligence, and not a little renovated by the slumbers into which she had herself fallen at intervals, she was at leisure to attend to some of the other circumstances that accompanied this strange reverse of fortune. Some of these, indeed, were immediately under her eye: she found herself once more in the chamber where she herself first opened her eyes, and where her dearest mother's were closed for ever. Her brother had reported to her, long since, that the Abbey was in ruins; that its blooms were all destroyed, and that whatever it contained had been, even like the wreck of an insolvent, variously dispersed; yet she had been reposing on, probably, the same bed, certainly surrounded by the same furniture, even to the slightest ornaments, which had graced it in her own natal, and in her poor parent's mortal hour. The very portraits of her grandfather, and of her mother lady Matilda, then a child, decorated,

rated, as before, the chimney-piece. "If the rumour," said she, "of the sale was not false, it must surely be magic—unless—perhaps"—

She hurried from a very tender idea, not at least to be encouraged, by going to the window; but from thence a continuation of similar objects struck her eye, and penetrated her heart. The chamber which both the mother and daughter had alternately occupied and resigned, was immediately over the flower garden. This, on her throwing up the sashes, welcomed her return with every fragrance, and regaled her with every florid bloom of the season.

"How is all this possible?" sighed she, "I certainly wake—I certainly speak—I move—" One of her women, whom she had enjoined to bring reports from her father's room, entered as she uttered this. Caroline had half begun a question, which she broke off by observing, "it was of no immediate consequence—another time, perhaps, she might trouble her with it—and requested to be left a little."

As

As her filial terrors began more to subside, closer and acuter recollections thronged to her memory. By a resistless force, and natural approximation, as well as celerity, her thoughts travelled from the abbey to the castle, and back again as fast.

By nature and by habit firm, self-denying, and steady to her principles, she had forborn to mention the names, either of Olivia or Henry, to her brother, even though from his new attachment he might possibly have heard them unmoved. But aware that human strength is baby weakness, if it inflates us with a daring confidence, or braves temptation, she had avoided every thought, as much as possible, that led to Henry Fitzorton.

Incapable, however, of change, she could not, like her brother, transfer her feelings, or compromise with her heart. She retained her sentiments of preference, without proposing, thereby, any idea, but that of carrying to the grave an original impression, unmixt with any image, external or interior, that should debase or sully it; to live in a
state

state of singleness and separation, far from an object who was solemnly and for ever disposed of; wishing both him and the sacred being, to whom he was bound, all human good in this world, and all bliss in the next. This comprized the whole plan of her existence; if we add only her unwearied prayers for an alteration in the former pursuits, and consequent practise, of her father, and her attentive affection to her brother's heart, which, when she found it capable of a change, she conducted by the most gentle and generous means, to that of Johanna.

In the performance of these several duties, and in observance of the laws she had herself instituted, for the government of her own heart, the recess in which she had passed the last few years, became, she thought, the most proper she could have found. So entirely suited, indeed, to her feeling was it, that, sweetened by friendship, and softened by sympathy, she ardently desired to remain there, to the remotest period of her days.

Sum.

Summoned, however, at length, by a voice which she would have followed, though it should lead from an earthly paradise to the gloom of a dungeon, the voice even of nature—breathed from a repentant father—she had again to approach scenes and objects, over which it had been the solemn business of her soul to draw an oblivious veil. She had long seen them in retrospect—every day added to their distance. The piety of Arthur, who pointed to higher prospects—the resignation of his fable attendant, who caught from his master's precepts the virtue of submission, even to the eternal loss of her he had left in the Indian world—and the purity of her own mind, had all a share in quieting her spirit, and in directing her ideas. But every thing was suddenly and unavoidably brought back. Inanimate and living objects, each interesting to her heart, encompassed her about; and John Fitzorton, relying on the force of her character, had not even made the conquest of her former attachment to his

his brother Henry a question: so that many things, which she could not but see—which she could not but feel, were wrapt in clouds of mystery.

Several points, however, were palpable, and to these her mind, always submissive, turned for relief as often as she could draw it from more uneasy and perplexing reflections. She again beheld the sun gilding the scenes of her youth. She was restored to her father. Her brother's indignant feelings for him were changed to duteous pity. She had again received the caresses of Olivia. A little chosen band from her former household smiled on her commands, and John Fitzorton, whom she had once supposed the greatest foe of her house, alas! with but too much cause, had approved himself its noblest friend.

Yet even to John Fitzorton, her heart assigned not the honours of preserving to her the sacred reliques, by which she saw herself surrounded. “Ah!” sighed she, with a softness that thrilled her frame, “if these well-remembered objects have ever

been dislodged—by whom were they replaced? My brother, Dennison, Arthur, and our Indian, were far remote—yet who even knew the particulars, or the appropriate places of all I now see in this consecrated apartment? The inventory can have been taken by no careless hand. Yes, sacred image of thy blissful years!” continued she, lifting up her eyes to the portrait of her mother, “Thou, the prime ornament of all about me—thou did’st not regain thy station here by means of one who was a stranger to thy virtues, or to their eternal impression on thy children:—doubtless, my mother, some friend to us both it was—and—blessed be his name—for ever.”

Turning from contemplations which had been forced upon her, she opened her door and passed into several of the other apartments. The naked walls, the half rotted casements, shaking from their frames—the damp that had lodged in the ceiling, and chilled the floors—the darksome look of most of the closed windows, across which the bars had rusted—and the dust which the winds

winds had beat up, and the frost hardened upon the sashes which had been left unfastened—with the woof of the spider, on which hung obscenely many a victim, the wily artificer still lying perdue in the centre of his snares:—these were all but so many confirmations of her former opinion, with respect to the care which had been taken of her apartment.

At this instant the lieutenant appeared at the bottom of a staircase that led to another division of the chambers on the east side of the abbey. Caroline ran to him, expressing a hope that he was comfortably lodged? “Well lodged, my sister? yes, in truth, too well for a soldier. But the furniture must be from the castle; nay, part of it, I think, from colonel Fitzorton’s chambers; I’ll swear to some of the articles. How did you find your own?” “Too well furnished, likewise, considering all things,” said Caroline, “but not—from—from the castle.”

Caroline’s hesitation incited the lieutenant’s curiosity; and, without any more questions,

he followed his sister back to her own apartment. No sooner had Charles cast his eyes around the room, than he exclaimed, "O this can be done only by Henry! I see him in every circumstance."

In a moment he felt Caroline's hand tremble within his own, and a cold paleness came over her face, like that of death — yet expelled as suddenly by a burning blush. "Pardon, ah pardon, my cruel rashness," cried Charles, "but I thought—" She pressed his hand kindly, and, elaborating a smile, hoped he would attend her to Sir Guise. He obeyed in silence; yet her agitation both distressed and surprised him.

We must explain this. Altho' it had been a settled point with Caroline, never to assist in reviving the image of Olivia, by mention of her name before Charles, even after she had reason to believe his affections had taken another bent; he had been equally circumspect, only while he felt an equal consciousness of the mighty powers that associate with the name of a beloved object. When his gliding heart had once deviated from the
7 point

point at which, as is common to all lovers, he thought it would fix for ever, he not only spoke of Henry and Olivia, with less and less irresolution, but even called Johanna his second Olivia, either from her real or fancied resemblance to that lady; and as Caroline had never testified, or at least as he had never noticed, any confusion similar to what he now observed; he presumed there lay no more danger in the name of Henry, than he himself found in that of Olivia: so prone are we to judge the feelings of others by our own. Alas, the lieutenant wholly forgot the different conformation of human minds. The young, the delicate, the interesting Johanna, had taught him, indeed, to forget every thing save herself; but had he consulted the great painter of minds, he would have known, that altho' he had adopted the advice of the merry-hearted Mercutio, by taking 'a new infection to his mind,' by the force of which 'the poison of the old had died,' his less mutable sister, who, though she gave her sorrows no voice, nor, at a distance from

their source, scarce knew herself how deeply that source was seated;—might, in a nearer advance to objects long unseen—and studiously shunned—and at such a crisis of her softened thoughts—feel as if the name of Henry

‘ Shot from the deadly level of a gun
Had murdered her.’

“ Finding her agitation increase, as she walked along, she begged the lieutenant would leave her a few moments to herself; but catching his hand eagerly, before she suffered him to depart, she exclaimed, “ O! let me not be mistaken—It is the remembrance of a generous and disinterested heart—it is the unexpected sight of its bounty, its pity, and its goodness: it is a combination in which are those sacred persons who are above and under the earth; and no object, no image, less hallowed than these has everwhelmed your Caroline.”

The lieutenant embraced her, and being now in an ante-chamber that joined her father's room, he said he would prepare Sir Guise to receive her.

She

She did not, however, remain long after him. He who calms the raging of the sea, can raise the innocent flower which the storm has beaten down. With him she communed; to him she bent the knee, and offered up the prayer which was accepted.

She rose tranquillized, and hearing herself called by a voice which, even when it summoned harshly, she had never disobeyed; she soon assisted the pious offices of a reconciled son by blending with them those of an exemplary daughter.

And now for some hours they had both the ineffable delight of testifying the blessed effects of a contrite spirit. The rock was softened, and the tears which gushed from thence, as from a pure source, were as living waters to cleanse the polluted soul. Sir Guise avowed his crimes, owned his sorrow, and his regret—confessed that he had erred beyond what the blameless minds of his children could image of wrong, but that now they were restored to him he had some assurance their innocent mediation would be accepted. Avowals like these he had made

before, and with fraudulent design, but the reign of hypocrisy was past, and conscience had at last ascended her rightful throne.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CHEARED by these appearances, and anxious to improve them, the good brother and sister sat on each side of their father's bed, and tried every thing most likely to continue the happy symptoms. In answer to some kind questions Sir Guise had asked, respecting the worthy old Dennison, whom he considered as amongst the first on the long list of those he had injured, Caroline produced a letter with which the veteran steward had charged her at parting, and which she promised to bring forward when it might most gratify the servant and the master. And this appeared to her the moment that it would set forth, in the simplicity of nature, the unaffected good wishes, and good will of an honest heart. Of this Caroline, from a long knowledge of the writer, was perfectly assured—but fearing that, in the unfolding these, there might be some expressions which a mind,

mind, sore from the wounds it had inflicted on itself, would feel too pointedly—she proposed to spare her father the trouble of perusing it by consigning it to her brother's reading, observing, that he might, at some future early opportunity, either report the substance or give the whole. Jerom and Jonathan, who had been keeping watch over the Baronet, offered to withdraw, but Sir Guise, with some energy, said—"as his improper behaviour to that much-wronged old man, and to every other person, had been public, so should be his confessions, his shame, and repentance." "I know," continued he, "my dear child's generous motive, but I must entreat to have the letter immediately, and will try to read it myself. For this purpose Sir Guise raised himself in the bed, and made many ineffectual efforts; but he had taken too wide a measure of his corporeal powers, or rather he had mistaken a momentary supply of spirits, from several cheering circumstances, for bodily strength; and unable even to bear the posture necessary to trace the characters of the letter, he was constrained

to lie down, and intreat his son to read it; as his desire to know the contents remained, and was, perhaps, increased by the difficulty of procuring them. The lieutenant having broken the seal, and unfolded the paper, began to read, but stopt in the middle of the first sentence. In vain did his father importune him to proceed. Caroline guessing, indeed perceiving, in some measure, the cause, from what she had already heard, now regretted she had mentioned the letter till Sir Guise had gained a little more strength. He agreed to this, and, feeling himself exhausted, said he wished to be alone.

The lieutenant and Caroline obeyed, and when they were gone Sir Guise made another ineffectual trial. "I see you are main willing, your honour, to hear what daddy Dennison says," cried Jonathan, who had returned into the chamber with Jerom—"and I," exclaimed the latter, "will read it, were it as cramp and crooked as our own." "Aye we'll make him out I warrant," answered Jerom, "an if it be long, why we can ride and tie you know, cousin. You a bit and I a bit." "Od's zookers, now you are got on the right

right side the post, your honour shan't be on the fidgets for the value of reading a letter; and so as the squire and young lady seem shilly-shally about it, what little book larning we have is at your service if you like to have it."

Taking the silence of the baronet for consent, though, in truth, he was silent because he had not recovered himself enough to speak, Jerom received the letter and began:

TO SIR GUISE STUART, BARONET.

"By favour of his most excellent, and never enough to be loved daughter.

"Honoured, and, as I may now say by God's grace, honourable, Sir—blessed be God for it:

"We are told, your honour, that nothing has, for a great while, been new under the sun, and that there has been an end put to miracles ever since the bible times—now that I take to be—to be—to be—"

What is that word Jonathan—he's as long as my leg.

“ And a pretty deal more crooked,” answered Jonathan, looking over his cousin’s shoulder, “ but I have him for all that—pokrifal, you fool, pokrifal, who’s the best scholar now I wonder?”

Jerom, clapping him on the shoulder, said, “ You are a fine old Greecein to be sure,” and proceeded: “ Now that I take to be pokrifal—for first it’s new to see, your honour, what I hear, with great joy, you now are beginning to be, that the sun, old as he is, mayhap shall hardly shine on the like again—and, secondly, so bad as you have been many long years, nothing but a marvellous miracle could make a good christian man of you again—for ’tis easier for a leopard to change his spots—you understand me, your honour—so I dare say that, under God’s favour, a miracle, and no small one, has been made on purpose for your honour.”

“ Daddy Dennison is a brave, sensible, old youth, an’t he coz,” said Jonathan.

“ Don’t put me out,” answered Jerom—

“ O,

“ O, fir, were the dear, good, real, lady Stuart, whom you—you—”

“ Better skip the next word, I fancy, coz,” said Jerom, hesitating—“ see here, just where I have put my finger.”

“ It’s the devil’s own word to be sure,” said Jonathan, “ but the steward meant it should be read, or he would not have put it down, besides the thing’s true, and so what signifies mincing of it ?”

“ Read on,” said Sir Guise, Jerom continued, “ *Real* Lady Stuart, whom you MURDERED, as a body may say by inches, were she alive to witness this good turn, she would almost die again with joy, but for that matter she does see it where she now is; and my old heart bounds to think there is now a chance you may meet her: how must your honour also feel when you have got a little over the shame on’t to have your all-good son and daughter by your side to forgive you, and to make your bed in your sickness, as the scripture saith. Your honour should have old Dennison about you too, but that I am rather dim sighted of late, and moreover
could

could no otherwise but by staying behind to keep house, and nurse my age, prevail on young master and mistress to go in comfort. So I thought the only way to shew my love, at this great distance, would be to indite my thoughts in a letter that your honour might know I was not the least glad to find you such an altered man—and from being the greatest—the greatest—

“Here’s another word,” said Jerom, checking himself, “which his honour may not like—looke.”

“Lord you are so squeamish—come I’ll finish it,” observed Jonathan, taking the letter and reading on—

—“And from being the greatest sinner, I think, I ever knew, are getting to be the greatest penitent; and heaven can tell it should be so, else the one can never be able to set off the other: I mention these things now out of pure kindness, that you may not imagine you have repented enough—for, alas! if your honour should live to the age of Mathusalem, and go in sack-cloth and ashes

ashes all the time, it would not be too much, seeing what is past."

A groan here issued from the bosom of Sir Guise. Jonathan whispered to Jerom, "That the groan was a good omen: but that he was glad he had come almost to the end of the letter, because," said he, "you see the poor man's face is covered with tears, and 'tis a pity to whip a horse to death when he sees his fault, and, after all his freaks, is going the right road. Here's only a bit more to end with, your honour."

"And now honoured, and praised be God, as I said in the beginning,—honourable, old,—and as I may say—new master, wishing you may go on with the good work, so that although your sins have been as scarlet, they may become white as snow, which we are told in holy writ, shall be the case to all true repenters,

I am, always,

Your old faithful servant,

to command,

NESTOR DENNISON."

"But

"But there's a postscript," observed Jerom, "only a few lines though"—

"We have all, young and old, lived here, as I may say, like people taken out of a pest-house, and put all at once into a paradise; but this, your honour, will hear from better hands. All grace to your honour, and no more at present, but love to every thing at the old abbey, and to little old Fitz if alive;—I dare say, if little Fitz knew how your honour had mended yourself, he would come and 'tend you too. As to squire Henry, and madam Olivia, I shall say nothing,—but heaven make 'em happy.—Your honour has not a little to repent of in that quarter,—but I have done."

"And its time you had, old boy," said Jonathan, folding up the letter and returning it to the baronet, who had felt the truth of every passage at his heart, but made no other comment than that which was written in his sighs and tears: both which
much

much affected the young kinsmen, who used every means in their power to console him, though, in fact, some of those intended consolations, like Dennison's epistle, probed, to a salutary end indeed, the deep-seated wound.

Meanwhile, Charles and Caroline had been trying to console one another: as it was a point pre-settled by the colonel, that they were not to go beyond the walled-garden at the west-end of the house, for fear of being seen and known by any of the villagers: they wandered without, perhaps, knowing their feet were in motion, over several parts of the house itself. In this ramble, they insensibly came to the room which Caroline had appropriated in happier hours, for its parallel situation to the castle. The instant, however, she had set her foot into it she drew back, as from sudden recollection, and would have taken another path, but the lieutenant arrested her step, by telling her that he saw from the window several persons coming down the grand avenue.—
“Good heaven!” exclaimed Caroline: “perhaps

haps I mean, heaven forbid that—did you say several persons, brother?”—

While she asked the question, she was mechanically moving forward in a direction which would have enabled her to answer it herself, for she approached to the window, rapidly caught a view, not only of the walking porter but of several well known objects. “I fancy, my dear Charles,” said she, trying to disguise her sensations, “it must be some of the family, with perhaps our own Islanders.”—“Yes,” answered the lieutenant, looking eagerly, “I think I can distinguish at this distance my mountain-daisy, Johanna.”—“Let us prepare to receive them,” observed Caroline, repressing a sigh, but taking her brother’s hand, and leaving the chamber, which had also some pieces of its ancient furniture, and particularly a little cabinet which she had not time to bring away, but which she now took under her arm.

When they had got back to her own apartment, one of the maids came up to inform her that True George was come laden

laden with all manner of good things from the castle, and with a message of love from his lady, saying, that she and her friends were coming to ask permission to partake of them. "They are not far off, ma'am," added the maid, "I, and Letty, saw them some time ago. They left their carriage at the park gates."

The question betwixt the brother and sister now was, where to receive them. "I suppose it must be in one of the chambers, for none of the lower rooms I understand have any furniture."—"O yes, sir," answered the maid, "the little saloon and parlour on the right hand are as nicely fitted up as ever, though not with any thing that was in them before."

New wonders seemed to take possession of Charles and Caroline. They exchanged looks, neither spoke, but followed the maid down stairs into the saloon, where the lieutenant recognized many of his old acquaintance of the castle, in the articles that adorned it.

But before they had leisure to form their feelings on the occasion, into any thing but desultory exclamations, the party, which consisted

consisted of Mrs. Fitzorton, Mrs. Herbert, Johanna, the colonel, and little John, were announced as just entering the abbey. Each brought some testimony of loving-kindness. One a basket of flowers, another of fruits. John Fitzorton had loaded his hands and pockets with food for the mind, while his nephew and sister-in-law carried between them a small wicker-pannier, which, the moment after their entrance, was laid at the feet of Caroline Stuart. "I wish I could tell you the happiness I have in rendering up my trust," said Olivia, "were my Henry here, he would do it for me,—he, who has an eloquence proper for every occasion; but in his absence, as none of these good people seem willing to help me out, I must e'en trust to your known goodness, sweet friend, and see whether the offering itself can supply my defects."

Olivia took the peg from the cover of the pannier, and the lid being laid open, uprose to the view of the company, the now almost withered, but still silky head of Caroline's favoured spaniel, poor old Fitz: his eyes, like

like Dennison's, were dim; his deep brown and once redundant ears, the hair of which was wont to curl like a cupid's head, hung languid down, and, although he had shared every delicacy with Henry and Olivia, the wasting power of time had made his face look meagre, while the other parts of his body, even amidst every sign of care and love, bore the marks of decay. He was still, however, sleek: to his protectors he had been interesting, and the tokens of a good old age were in his countenance. He was received by his long absent mistress with all the cordiality that attached to him: indeed, so many were the sensations, that the unexpected sight of him brought into her mind's eye, that her corporeal one could not hold its tears, while the cause of them himself, after being lifted from his downy bed in the pannel, and often passing his face over the lovely hand that caressed him, began to shew signs of grateful recognition.

“ I assure you, my dear Caroline, if it had been possible,” cried Mrs. Fitzorton, “ I would

would have restored him to you in all the beauty that graced him at your departure, and had you seen how anxious Henry has been to keep him from suffering, even by the power of time—alas! the spoiler of us all!—you would have loved him for it. And the dog loved him for it too—for I am in favour only when my husband is absent. Yes, Fitz,” continued Olivia, “you know, when your master is at home, I am but a kind of second-best with you.—He, who, as one of his favourite bards expresses it, was ‘made to engage all hearts’ is your first love; so he is mine, and yet though you have been my rival I forgive you.”

While Olivia thus talked to, and fondled little Fitz, Johanna and Charles had got into a little *tête-à-tête* in another part of the saloon—as had the colonel and Mrs. Herbert. With respect to Caroline, although nothing could be more apparently trivial than what had dropped from Mrs. Fitzorton, on the topic of the four-footed favourite—an old, decrepid little animal—she felt it of the utmost

most importance, and had never known an event in her life that required more management to prevent its being noticed, that, she paid the circumstance a disproportionate attention.

Little John, with that acute remark which belongs to children, asked his mother, "if the lady was not taken very ill; and I am sure, said he, 'tis a pity such pretty eyes should ever weep—yet, any body may see, there are tears in them now.—Except yourself, mamma, I think I never saw so handsome a lady—and I dare say, papa would think so too. I'll write to him about her."

Caroline over-heard part of this: some of it caught the ear of John Fitzorton, who walked restless about the room, then desiring Johanna to join Olivia, he said to Charles, in a governed voice, "Lientenant, I fear your sister is still unhappy! You should have told me this." "I knew it not myself," answered Charles.

"It must appear strange," cried Caroline, as

as if conscious she had excited conversation, “that I should have bestowed on this little brute so much more than is his due, while I am in the presence of so many persons who have higher claims to my grateful attention; but the truth is, I am every way so surrounded by those invaluable claimants, and feel so powerfully the impayable debt I owe them, that I shrink under the conscious weight of unnumbered obligations, and deplore the insignificance of my powers to express my feelings.”

“Express them only, sweet Caroline,” said Olivia, “in being happy—in thinking that you are part of ourselves—in believing that Providence has, at length, heard our mutual prayers—your’s in rendering a parent worthy of your love; our’s in bringing you, after many a fruitless wish, within reach of friends so very precious to us. I cannot be surprised at your present emotions: I know full well they must partake equally of pain and pleasure; but the former, I trust, will hourly decrease, and the latter receive some large additions.”

The

The air of soothing, and the accents of encouragement, with which the admirable Olivia spoke this, the generosity of its motive, and the soft blandishments which illustrated, by tender action, every heart-felt word, wrought powerfully on the grateful Caroline, who suffered herself to be heard: and on Olivia's expressing a hope that she found Sir Guise better, and the abbey a little more like its former self than fame had rumoured it, Caroline said, smilingly, "that she should have thought it all the work of some good Genii, had she not long known that a race of beings, superior in benevolence to every fabled creation, resided in Fitzorton castle, and dispersed their blessings to all around—and to such magicians she attributed the enchantments which awaited her own, and her brother's return to the abbey.

Thus by a happy and innocent compliment to the family in general, did Caroline throw a timely veil over the particular cause of her late perplexity.

John Fitzorton, however, still appeared anxious, and traversed from one party to an-

other without fixing near any body long enough to begin discourse. His disquietude was silently noticed by Olivia, who, imputing it all to tender emotions in the presence of his beloved Caroline, stole towards him with an "assurance, that all these inevitable asperities would in time soften, and that though she would not betray his secret for the world, she could not but think many things which had dropped from Caroline, admitted an interpretation in his favour.— These she promised to impart when she got home; and as Sir Guise was now restored to virtue, she hoped her dear John would not shut up his mind against any kind impressions."

While John was considering whether it would be best to let Olivia continue this mistake, or to correct it in part, Mrs. Herbert came forward to say, that Caroline had been suggesting the impossibility of quitting her father so soon, and had intreated her to intercede with the colonel for her and her party remaining some time longer. "O, by all

all means!" interposed Olivia, "grant her filial wishes, send away the carriages at once, and let us all assist in the recovery of the now good parent, and the consequent felicity of his children!"

Johanna and the lieutenant again got together. "Ah! my Charles," exclaimed the former, not in jealous, but in consciously humble accents, "would I had never seen the lovely Olivia! your affection for me, you have often said, was grounded on a fancied resemblance of her, and if so, O how must the poor ineffectual copy fade in your eye in a comparison of the original, which, surely, is grace and loveliness itself!—I have shrunk, even in my own idea, ever since I first saw her in this meridian splendour of her charms. Even in her infancy she was fascinating; but how little was I prepared for the attractions which now surround her. — 'Tis true, she is the wife of your friend, and you hold her sacred and appropriate—but if you love me only for my similitude to those features, my hopes to retain

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tain your heart must be faint even as that similitude ; yet were the sight of her to rob me of your heart, could I forbear to love the author of my despair, when I see her thus arrayed in every grace—in every virtue ?” Charles could only reply to this by an ardent glance, and gentle pressure of the hand, for Arthur, Floresco, and the apothecary came into the room, with a summons from Sir Guise Stuart, who understanding there were some of the castle family below, said he should think himself honoured if any of them would deign to attend his son and daughter into his chamber, that he might pour before them his true thanks for their unbounded goodness to him and his. Burton said he believed the visit would act upon the spirits of his patient, as a richer cordial than any he could prescribe for him. Arthur insisted it would be an act of spiritual charity. Caroline pleaded eloquently, without uttering a word. Olivia took the hand of the latter, and said, she would answer for the assent of Johanna and Mrs. Herbert, to every thing

Arthur had pronounced charitable: "John, I am sure," added she, "cannot refuse to promote his own good work." "No," said his nephew, "though my uncle is a philosopher, he can just laugh and cry like a little brat, as I am; I have made him often do both myself—so has sister Carry."

Besides wishing to do every good he attempted, effectually, John desired to see how the long-implored, and, at length, granted request of Sir Guise to see his children, had operated, "if the lieutenant leads," said he, "the colonel shall follow, although contrary to military etiquette."

"I thought," observed Olivia, "that in all the little matters of this great world, we women were the commanding officers, and that wherever the ladies led, not only captains and colonels, but all their armies were proud to follow; however, as we depute lieutenant Charles and colonel John our aid-de-camps on the occasion, we order them to go forward."

"If poet papa had been here," cried little John, "I know what he would have called them." "What!" questioned the colonel, "not aid-de-camps, but gentlemen of the bedchamber, uncle, and if I can get to the room first, I shall be the page in waiting, you know."

Little John, bribing the apothecary to accompany him, ran out of the saloon, and if there had before been any difficulty, his apt and playful allusion would have settled it: the feelings of the party, which had been somewhat entangled in a labyrinth, by the preceding conversation, now concentrated in one generous point, and they were conducted by Charles to his father's chamber.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

NEITHER little John, however, nor his friend the apothecary, though both nimble-footed beings, were the first persons of the groupe who reached the afore said apartment.

Arthur's

Arthur's Floresco no sooner understood, from a whisper of his master, that it was the intention of the party to indulge the baronet in his desire, than he slipped imperceptibly out of the saloon, while the company were settling the order of their going: he luckily met True George, to whom he imparted the news, and both flew with it to Sir Guise, who no sooner heard the tidings, than he begged George would assist him in some little preparations for their reception. Exerting, therefore, all his force, and assisted not only by George and Floresco, but the egregious letter readers, Jonathan and Jerom—the good apothecary, and his young companion, found the valetudinarian faint, from the labours of equipment, or rather of supporting the fatigue of being equipped, but arrayed in one of the comfortable changes of an invalid's wardrobe, which the diligent and pious love of Caroline had purchased on her way, in addition to what had been supplied by the considerate friendship of colonel Fitzorton and Olivia.

The party on entering were pleasingly surprised to observe Sir Guise Stuart able to receive them in that manner. He testified the fullest sense of obligation to all in general, but repeatedly called the colonel the restorer of his children and himself. Some—he observed, looking first at Olivia, then at George, were absent—whom he dared not expect to see, but for whom he had poured his daily, hourly prayers.

“He means my beloved Henry, and dear Jane Atwood,” whispered Olivia to Caroline.

“Yet if all now present will cheer my throbbing heart with the sounds of forgiveness, undeserved as I feel it is, I may still hope that the pardon of the absent, great as have been my offences to them, may in time be added unto me.”

He next insisted upon kneeling under the support of his children, to receive the forgiveness of the company, and when he was led to True George, that humble creature, unable to see his superior in station in any posture

posture that implied condescension, without meeting him on equal terms, bent his knee to the baronet at the same time, and assured him in a generous whisper, "that it should not be long before his forgiveness was sealed by both the certain persons he had alluded to; meanwhile he begged him to believe that, he could answer for it, neither the one nor the other bore him any malice."

Floresco had thrown himself into a suppliant position, in a quiet corner, almost folded in the bed curtains.

The good Burton was very desirous to shorten this scene, which, he observed, was becoming much too strong for his patient: but the most trying part which the latter had allotted to himself was yet to be performed. "Grant me, I pray you," said the almost exhausted man, "the indulgence of another moment,—while in the presence of those I have wronged, I now publickly solicit what has already been privately granted to me, the forgiveness of the two beings I have the most injured. O pardon, pardon my children, the author of your lives, as of all the tyrannies,

torments and frauds which have rendered those lives intolerable. Pardon him who has deprived you of health, peace, fortune, and, severer than all, of a parent worthy of your loves, good, virtuous, and sincere. Pardon him whom you ought to execrate, pray for him whom you ought to despise, desert, and curse, in return, O God in just return, for the curses he has poured on you!"

Sir Guise had sunk from the arms of his children on his knees, and folded his trembling hands, and lifted up his streaming eyes. Finding it in vain to attempt checking the effusion of his furcharged heart, his son and daughter knelt with him, and by every tender evidence their own situation allowed, strove to convince him he had atoned for every thing. Charles importuned him for pardon on his own impetuous, and perhaps unfilial errors, instead of imitating his meek and uncomplaining sister. Caroline, wholly regardless of so many observers, was only intent to raise her father from his humiliating posture; and this being effected by means of

of

of the colonel and True George, Jerom and Jonathan having left the room, he was no sooner replaced on the bed, than Caroline entreated the company would leave him to composure, in the care of herself and Charles. She then concealed her father from observation, by drawing the curtains round him, knelt by his side, and while she used every soothing power of her tender heart, conjured him to believe that he had not only conciliated the respect of all who had heard, all who had seen his distress, and possessed her own and her brother's tenderest love; but that he might be convinced the angel spirit of his wife, and the spirit of God himself would be his propitiated guardians.

Father Arthur confirmed this in the name of the Almighty.

With great difficulty John got his sympathizing friends out of the chamber. Every one offering to be the nurse of the father and associate of the child. Burton, however, suggesting that the very life of sir Guise, who, he said, was in a much more perilous

state than they imagined, depended on their observing the wise and delicate request of his daughter, they went down stairs. The company waited in the saloon till the apothecary had again visited his patient, and as he perceived the only restoratives to be hoped were rest and quiet; he had interest enough with the party to persuade them to return home, which they did after one of Caroline's women, following the orders of Olivia, had softly taken up little Fitz into Caroline's own chamber.

CHAPTER XXXV.

IN this exhausted state however, the lulling powers of the apothecary's prescription, and of slumber, gradually restored sir Guise, of whose comparative recovery a message was taken by the worthy Burton himself to the castle, after his evening visit to the abbey; but the baronet's situation was pronounced, in answer to John's still earnest enquiries, too precarious either for his removal

removal to any other place, or for withdrawing the consolation of his children.

It was, therefore, necessary for John to send away the carriages, and that the drivers might not commit any blunders by unnecessary gossipings on the road, it was determined that, as True George might be wanted at home, Jerom and Jonathan should, on pretence of having business that way, see them safe back to town: for, although when Irwin recommended them, he said they were to be trusted—the colonel had frequently expressed regret on the journey, when it was too late to make new arrangements, that he had not thought of Jerom and Jonathan, and even Irwin himself, rather than confide in any persons more immediately out of the family: but, alas! such is the imperfection of human foresight even in the most sagacious minds. The plan, however, of dismissing the chaises, appearing the first best measure to be taken, the two trusty cousins sportingly told their sweethearts at Little Brixham, they were going to London to buy them gingerbread husbands, and
receiving

receiving due instructions from the colonel, began their journey in the dusk of that very evening.

But this measure went to the removal of only one, and that an inconsiderable perplexity, in the project with which John Fitzorton had embarrassed himself. Prompted, in the first instance, by the exhilarating thought of encouraging penitence, of obtaining a victory over that hate, of which he now thought the remains ought not to harbour in his bosom, against a punished foe, who sought his mercy, anxious to mitigate the dire pangs of two worthy children, who were hiding their heads from an iniquitous parent, and flattering himself that the gratification he wished to gain for both parties, might be carried on, and completed without any counteraction of events, he forgot to provide against many points of which his heart, though usually provident, had not suffered him to suspect the danger. Henry himself could not have precipitated a benevolence with a more fervid but perilous rapidity.

The

The time of Mrs. Fitzorton's confinement, from the prospect of a third child, drew near; the return of her husband could not, in affection, or in propriety, be long protracted; Olivia grew daily more and more fond of Caroline's society, and he himself became shocked at the idea that he might have led the latter into an inevitable relapse of sensibility, on the sharp point of which, though her principles would remain unshaken, her heart might receive an involuntary wound. He knew from himself the possibility of uniting the weakness of sensation with the strength of practical virtue: and he felt by experience also, that as a soldier and a man, *retreat* was often the only measure of security: and as to the doctrine of annihilating the passions of the soul, while their sovereign objects were brought close under the eye, he allowed the duty of inculcating it, and felt the necessity of the sentiment, of daily praying not to be led into temptation: for though every impure thought will be expelled, even if, for a moment, it should dare to approach the
truly

truly virtuous mind, the thought may be pure, while the heart, the very source of that purity,

“ May bleed and agonize at every pore.

He was not altogether at ease with respect to the state of the lieutenant's affections; his own had long been under the despotism of his determined sway: he continued a tyrant on himself, and wrenched the sceptre from each unruly passion as it made head against him. But he soon saw that the ill-smothered affections of Henry, the half-restored peace of Caroline, and the hitherto well managed happiness of Olivia, were all again at hazard, and made so even by a project of his own.

Reflections of this kind began to harass him as he returned with his party to the castle, after the interesting scene in the baronet's chamber.

Every succeeding day increased the apprehension, and there was not one with whom he could share the confidence, save the lieutenant,

lieutenant, who, except in his own case, saw clearly the danger, but no immediate way of removing it; as his father alternately recovered and relapsed, and though his life would not probably be long, he felt it a kind of parricide to shorten it by leaving him.

Olivia also began to be importunate on the subject of Henry. She allowed every merit to John's original motive, but said, that matters at the abbey had taken upon the whole so happy a turn, that she thought it would do her husband rather good than harm to make him partaker of the general felicity. She submitted to John, whether there was not something cruel in thus shutting him out of his share of joy in the return of Henry's friend? As John did not well know how to get rid of these reasonings, he remained silent, which being taken for a species of assent, she followed up her supposed advantages, sometimes by the aid of Mrs. Herbert and Johanna, and sometimes Olivia would call in Caroline herself as an auxiliary; and she attributed the embarrass-
ment

ment which she discovered in that young lady to an unwillingness to oppose any measure in which John Fitzorton did not seem heartily to concur.

And as if these entanglements wanted yet another twist, Olivia hinted to John her perfect assurance that he would find in her husband the warmest friend his passion for Caroline could wish, and that even upon that account his presence was desirable. Although, said she, the uncertain state of sir Guise's health, would make it indelicate and unseasonable to point to subjects of that kind, I have omitted no occasion since her arrival to do justice to your merits, of which, indeed, I find her impressed in a manner the most favourable.

This opinion was now so fixed in Mrs. Fitzorton's imagination, that at every opportunity she spoke of her brother John's various excellencies—and although, said she, “that beloved being, who, I hope, will shortly be amongst us, yields to none the palm either of genius or goodness, and seems every hour to gain new attractions, by a certain peculiar
tenderness

tenderness that attaches to all he says or does—pardon me, for paying him in absence this passing tribute which rises from my full heart.—I know not any head, or any heart, but those of Henry, which can vie with John Fitzorton's."

Glad of a subject which might give a relieving turn to that which Olivia had excited, Caroline fastened with an eager haste on the merits of a man who luckily supplied her with abundant sources of eulogy. Finding that Mrs. Fitzorton only knew, partially, the history of the colonel's protective goodness to herself and friends, she gave the particulars of this patronage in the most generous and glowing colours. Warmed by the honest theme, she rose above all selfish emotions, and drew the character of that exalted man, till she affected her fair auditor even to tears; and although Olivia conceived somewhat less of John's conduct, as to its disinterestedness, even than it deserved, thinking the grand agent therein to be love, and allowed less merit also to Caroline's encomiums, which, instead

instead of confining to gratitude, she imputed to love also; she saw clearly her brother's manly hand, and beneficent heart, in various characteristic displays. When Caroline's incense was paid, Olivia felt herself called upon by the voice of equity, and of love likewise, to mention the part which her Henry had taken in the affairs of Caroline and Charles. — How often we have traced your paths, paused in your shades, praised your virtues, wept at your misfortunes—your's, and the lieutenant's!—abroad and at home, you have mingled in our hopes, our fears—and although, from a generous apprehension that my Henry, whose health and spirits are of late uncertain, might feel too powerfully from the sudden sight of friends so long despaired of, the excellent John has projected a temporary absence; doubt not, but when we have prepared him for the joy of such a meeting, Caroline, that his happiness will be supreme. Meanwhile, though I acknowledge that our brother has entitled himself, by more important services, to the first place,

as

as Esau appropriated the birth-right, my Henry has a claim to the second: nor must I forget to inform you, that a little stranger, who is now with her father, our first born, is honoured by bearing your name, and I hope soon to present her.

John Fitzorton joined them abruptly, just as Olivia finished, and thinking it the moment in which he would appear in lustre before Caroline, would have left them together, but that the colonel expressed a hasty and eager desire to confer with Olivia on some dispatches he had received from Partington. She therefore took an affectionate leave of Caroline, and attended John home.

On the return of our amiable Caroline into the abbey,—for the preceding interview had taken place in the flower garden;—she was accosted by the good Arthur, who was just descending from the orisons he had been offering up in the baronet's apartment. The report he made of that unfortunate man's mind was no less favourable than what the apothecary had been able to send her of his body. "He has had another comfortable repose,"

repose," said he, "and his piety is uniform even when his health is irregular. And I have received a welcome present this morning, my dear child, upon which I am sure you will congratulate me—observe," continued he, taking a small parcel from his pocket—"folded in this careful envelope, and wrapt literally up in cotton—observe, my child, the keys of my chapel-house, chapel, and the hallowed sanctuary to which it leads: on the outside of my parcel you see is written, in fair and legible characters, words that describe at once—benevolence and truth. 'Sacred deposits.' "The hand," exclaimed Caroline, "is"—"No matter whose the hand," said father Arthur,—“the heart that governed it was bountiful, noble—and restores to me more than recovered empires. Dear and holy scenes! I will offer the tribute of my thanks to the generous beings who have saved you from prophanation, and although, haply, I may find in you the marks of a desolated, long absent friend, thy altered state shall but the more endear thee to Arthur.”

“ And to Caroline,” sighed she.

“ And poor Floresco shall make thee all as him was used,” cried the little Indian, who bounded at the thought of once more seeing the scenes of his early care ; and as Arthur delivered to him the keys, he pressed them to his lips, to give them welcomes.

The colonel, who had received them from Olivia, presented them to Arthur, only intreating that if they were made use of, it might be late in an evening, to avoid that discovery which he now found so difficult, yet so necessary to be prevented. Caroline’s secret thoughts, however, had gone to the most holy places to which these keys appertained, almost immediately on her arrival, and though she did not know how to give those thoughts a voice, from the fear of seeming to press on the colonel’s exhortation to keep within the bounds of the immured flower-garden, and abbey, she hailed the prospect of having her sollicitude on this subject granted without importunity. Her wishes being now made known to the good
Arthur,

Arthur, he readily gave his promise to be her conductor on the very first evening she could be spared with satisfaction to herself from her attendance on Sir Guise.

Arthur himself, however, resolved to dedicate the coming night to his ancient abode. It will be best that I and my little white-hearted black man should go first, and make our little preparations. Floresco embraced, as usual, his master's robes, at finding himself included in the visit to the spot where he had received the first precepts of christianity, and the first pure idea of a God.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

MEANTIME the trials of Caroline accumulated from every quarter. They frequently pursued her into her father's chamber, where, as she watched the too languid or too fervid pulse, or held the now parched, and now humid hand of Sir Guise, he would frequently lament, amongst the other causes of
his

his regret, the disingenuous part he had acted, in regard to herself and Henry Fitzorton; in reply to all which, though she felt the truth of every word, like a poisoned arrow, whose barb had been left to rankle in her heart, she would uncomplainingly "beg him to be comforted on every part of that subject, as the person he mentioned, not only constituted the happiness of one of the most amiable of human kind, but was, she trusted, supremely happy himself; and when a more particular review of these afflictive circumstances made it impossible for her to answer, she would pour the balms of silent forgiveness on her self-execrating parent, by assuring him, that she considered Mrs. Fitzorton's goodness, manifested both at the castle and the abbey, as deserving every blessing heaven could bestow, and that she loved, revered, and honoured her, beyond any woman then living:" in which assurance she exceeded not the truth.

On returning to her father's apartment, from her conversation with Arthur, she had the heart-felt comfort of finding him so

much mended as to converse on several topics he had never before agitated. He required from his attendant children, the history of their wanderings, and as Caroline imagined the knowledge of John Fitzorton's guardianship of herself and party, would tend to establish a reconciling sentiment, she repeated to her father what she had told to Olivia. It is not possible to paint the mingled emotions of admiration and respect Sir Guise now felt for the colonel, or the sense of shame and self-abasement for himself. At a more composed moment, however, of the same day, he eased his now sinking and now over-flowing heart, by entering into a detail of the conduct of Olivia and True George towards him, as it had been reported in different conversations by the apothecary.

The brother and sister now heard all that part of the benevolent story which appertained to Olivia, and which she had omitted in her own narration; fresh causes of admiration and of gratitude to both Olivia and George were hence discovered, and it was made manifest what mighty blessings

blessings these two excellent beings, under the conduct of John Fitzorton, had bestowed. The good Burton's own benignity was next the subject of the baronet's eulogy: the voluntary attendance of Jonathan and Jerom had their due share of his praise—and, in fine, from this evening's discourse, in addition to what she had before gathered from Olivia, a complete history of the transactions of the abbey and the castle, from the time of her departure even unto that moment, was in Caroline's possession.

Her whole soul was filled with wonder, and with praise; and combining the bounty and protection which she and her dearest friends had received from the same sources, she rose in pious thought, and as her meditation ascended from finite to infinite, her spirit communed with that power, who out of darkness and anarchy, natural and moral, can educe light, and bring forth order.—

“ Ah, assure yourself, my dearest brother, and my honoured father,” exclaimed she, “ while all of *us* have thus been in the care of heaven's best creatures, *they* have been

wrought on in our favour by heaven itself! all of us were in need of divine assistance, and the manner in which the effects have been brought about cannot leave us a doubt of the cause."

"Blessed be his holy name," ejaculated Sir Guise.

Soon after this, the baronet confessed he felt much relieved by having paid the debt he thought due to the patrons of his repentance: and although the length and interruptions of his narrative had wearied his body, his spirits were lighter, and his mind more refreshed than it had been for some time.

In this tranquil period father Arthur came into the apartment, and entered on the vesper duties of his office; these being ended, the baronet declared his wish to devote the rest of the night to that repose which he augured he should best enjoy, if his slumbers were unbroken by the idea that his too diligent children were losing their own necessary restoratives: and this being a point insisted on by the apothecary, who had come in with Arthur, Sir Guise was left in the care of a single attendant,

attendant, and the rest of the party retired.

They retired, but not to sleep. Too many awful images impressed the bosoms of the brother and sister to permit them to indulge even the thoughts of repose. Father Arthur too, and his Indian, were wakeful: the former told Caroline, that a sudden message brought by True George from the colonel, who requested to have back the keys, put a stop to his intended visit to the chapel-house; but that Mr. Burton had now brought word from the castle, "if any of the party felt it material for the quiet of their minds to resort thither, and had no objection to the present evening, he and George would be their conductors, and guide them by a *secret way*."

It is scarcely possible to express the eagerness with which the whole party caught at this proposition. Caroline enquired earnestly after the secret way which Burton had intimated, and when the subterraneous passage which led from the uninhabited part of the abbey, and which had been in ancient days the ordinary path from thence to the chapel-

house, and which all had frequently heard of, they seemed much to wonder it had not occurred in relief of their late embarrassment: forgetting their minds had been engrossed by a multiplicity of absorbing objects which kept every power in action. True George observed to them that his master, Henry, had often passed more time than he should mention in some of the recesses of that very passage, and, to his knowledge, gone at midnight all alone, as he thought, by that path to the abbey.

A universal wish to profit of the present opportunity possessed every one, and O let us not lose a moment! breathed in a deciding whisper from Caroline to the rest. George placed a fresh candle in the lantern with which he had been conducting Burton. Lead, said the lieutenant. George was in motion: Francisco took the robe of Arthur and followed: Caroline was conducted by her brother and the apothecary. The night was dark, but they passed along the ruins without any impediment, and gained the trap-door which shut

shut from observation the steps that led by a very deep descent into the subterraneous way. George now begged the company to pause until he lighted a torch, which he said he had left a step or two farther on. They stopt, but what was their surprise when he returned to them saying, that "the torch had been taken from the place where he had put it." 'It must have fallen down,' said Caroline, 'but the lantern will do, my good friend, perfectly well.' They went forward slowly; the masses of stone, mortar and fragments that had fallen in the path, in many parts, made it very difficult to pass; and the light which was afforded by the taper in the lantern but dimly shewed the obstructions. Cautiously, however, pursuing the path, which, though not in the straight line, was sufficiently broad in general, they came to a stone seat, projecting from the wall, where Arthur proposed they should rest a moment. He prevailed on Caroline to sit down.

"Ah! my dear good young lady, if you knew how often a certain person had been on that very seat," sighed George! "Pray,

let us go forward," said Caroline, rising, "I am perfectly able to proceed." — As they came to a curve in the passage a little farther on, and which George, holding the lantern, had gained first, he exclaimed,—" Good heavens ! look, look, there's my torch, as sure as I am alive." Nothing of this, however, appearing to the company, as in the next instant they turned the angle, it was attributed to fear, or rather fancy ; for George had nothing of the former in his nature. Presently they came within sight of another recess, as they approached which, a dark shadow, resembling a human figure, palpably arose from the seat in view of the whole company, and ran with great speed along the passage. On referring to one another it was admitted, that every one had seen it at the same moment, and in the same point of view ; but without making any reflection they pressed onward, and with very little interruption arrived at a large circular opening within a few paces of the correspondent trap-door. — " There is the torch again," cried George, — " look, it is now going away

away through one of the gaps in the wall !”

It was, indeed, visible to all for some moments, and then disappeared.

“ It is very strange,” said Arthur ; “ yet it cannot be an illusion to us all : neither can it, if not imaginary, be of ill augury to beings seeking a place of peace and holiness—so let us go fearless on.”

“ Perhaps,” observed Francisco, “ it may be the evil spirit that once haunted the poor gentleman in the abbey, and is now wandering about this dark dismal spot under ground without any body to speak to it, or keep it company, because of its wickedness.”

“ As sure as can be that is it,” asserted True George, “ and it may go on walking and wailing that way these thousand years ; but as his reverence says, if it be the devil himself, it can have nothing to say to us—so here we go again.” “ I rather apprehend it to be,” observed Burton, “ if it really be not a deception of our senses, some of the ——” as the apothecary was proceeding in his conjecture——

“Hark! hush!” cried the lieutenant, “I certainly heard some body speak.”

They broke short their steps, but all was still; they walked forward to the trap-door, when a second noise of voices, not their own, induced them to listen, and the word murder distinctly issued from one of the corners of the circular opening.

“In the name of God,” demanded Arthur, advancing, — “what is your purpose?”

By this time George had gained the trap, and opened the door that led to the secret steps that conducted to the edge of the forest, near which stood the chapel-house. And just as Caroline was preparing to ascend the steps, while George held the lantern to clear her path, the figure which had been seen soon after they entered the passage, now more decidedly human, accompanied by two others, flitted along, and though every one followed and attempted to stop them, they gained the top, and were lost in the forest almost instantly.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

BUT these mysterious appearances were soon succeeded by magic of a different kind, for taking the wood-path, the little gothic gate that separated the chapel-house front garden from the forest, presented the object of their midnight ramble. The monk, preceding the action by a spontaneous effusion of his truly pious soul, approached the door of his beloved mansion; and after assuring his friends that whatever unhallowed things might be permitted to hover without its walls, he was certain all within was pure, and holy.

The door opened while he was yet speaking as if by an invisible hand; for on entering, after a short pause, no one appeared; but in the next instant fresh scenes of wonder rose before them. In the first compartment of the chapel-house the sacred lamp was lighted that hung over the *benetiere*. The crucifixes in the *scriptorium*, and in every other part, bore shining marks of constant and even of reverential care. The dormitory could still

boast its wholesome couch for the Franciscan, and the attendant pallet by its side was invitingly spread for the faithful Floresco—but how shall we duly describe what presented itself to our astonished guests in the *refectoire*? how represent their sensations on beholding the table covered modestly, yet abundantly, with every fruit and flowret of the season? and while their admiring eyes were fixed on these, a sweet and solemn breathing sound as of ærial music, accompanied by a voice of softest melody, invited their attention. All seemed enchantment! and the sacred spell was yet stronger when they found both the words and the air, were designed to gratulate the long-absent father of the chapel-house and his friends to their modest resting-place. As they stood, even at the door of the *refectoire*, listening, and observing on these, forth issued, from a small recess at the bottom of the room, the enchanters themselves—Olivia Fitzorton and Jane Atwood.

The surprize and effect of this encounter upon the whole company, at such a time,
and

and in such a place, was extremely affecting. Divine and human sentiments seemed to mix. "Do not imagine," exclaimed Olivia, advancing, "that you are under any conjuration. Every thing you see and hear has fallen out quite in the common way. I expected that the return of the keys, and the good apothecary's offer, would immediately bring you hither; we busied ourselves therefore in making our little preparations: when all was ready, we persuaded the colonel to conduct us, unknown even to Johanna and Mrs. Herbert, for the delight of a little stratagem of this kind is its mystic secrecy; and here have we been ever since sadly afraid that our commander in chief would return to escort us back before you came. Pray pardon the deception, and enjoy the reality.

"Fair and virtuous lady," said Arthur, "had I not before had reason to believe that the veritable author of all good can inspire some of his creatures to kinder actions than were ever painted by mere human fancy for the fabled Arcadia, I should, perhaps, believe that I was transported into fairy land, and that

that you and this fair damsel, were the benevolent Genii; but I had rather do homage to God's own creations than to the best and brightest of mere imagination. It is real excellence, real philanthropy, to which I now bow my knee, and before whom I now pour forth my heart." Every one followed the example, and reiterated the effusion of the holy father.

But, in pure obedience to heaven-taught feelings, the sable child of nature, not contented with simple kneeling, fell prostrate at Olivia's feet, then pressed the hem of her garment to his lips, kissed the sacred earth near which she stood, and, indeed, almost every well remembered object in the chapel-house, running rapidly from one to the other. Jane Atwood took the earliest opportunity to question Caroline how she had left her father, then joined the side of her True George, well satisfied with the information she had received. Charles was wrapt in silent admiration. Arthur now paid his visit of greeting to other objects dear to recollection—the storied windows, sacred figures, sculptured

tured effigies of the virgin and the redeemer, and found them all in the most perfect preservation—the emotions of his innocent heart mounted to his eyes as he made this survey. Floresco accompanied him, and having indulged his first ungovernable emotions, followed the lead of his master in similar silence, and with similar feelings—the words: “ Oh, blessed saviour! oh, hallowed Maria! oh, Lord of earth and of heaven! make us worthy of these thy benignities,” were reiterated at almost every step.

Meantime, Olivia again struck the harmonious chords, and, by an air yet more solemn, carried the soul still nearer to the skies.—“ Lady,” observed Arthur, “ the words of both the strains, with which you have honoured us, seem to me well meriting the melody in which you convey them to our hearts.” “ Ah, they deserve a far better harmonist, sacred sir,” answered Olivia—“ they are the effusions of my own Henry’s muse: we had always, as you have already heard, our hopes, that you would again take
pos-

possession of this little sanctuary, and in our frequent day-dawning or twilight visitations, we consulted one another what would find most favour with the owners, and what be most worthy of the place—yet they were not consultations, holy sage, so much as impulses—we have sometimes dared to think them inspirations, and in one—a very—very recent one;—of these, my husband, at my urgency, wrote for me the beautiful words to which you have done so much justice in your approbation—to these I attempted the imperfect founts you have honoured with such welcome flattery.” “If,” continued Olivia, with uncommon fervor of air and accent, “if they have the smallest portion of the poet’s fire it was reflected from him, and a sincere desire not to disgrace the subject. Methinks there wants but the society of the poet to render it one of the most blessed points of time that ever hath been, or, indeed, ever can be expected to happen in mortal life !”

Caroline had left Olivia’s chair, behind
which

which she had placed herself during the air, and had gone somewhat hastily to another part of the room—from thence she moved onward till she reached the private door that communicated with the chapel. Over this door was a projecting arch that formed a small porch, in which two seats were carved, gothic fashion, in the stone work. She had moved the curtain which was usually dropt betwixt the *refectoire* and the entrance of the chapel; and, retiring from observation, had at first sat herself down in one of the seats.

The enchantments, which Olivia had been spreading, caught every ear and every eye, but the instant she had ceased to speak she missed Caroline, and found her kneeling at the door of the chapel.

“ Ah, my sweet suppliant,” exclaimed Olivia, supposing Caroline to have been praying, “ doubt not every wish, every prayer of your pious soul will, in due time, be granted! The whispering of angels thronging about my own soul assure me it will be so—but this night must be devoted only to festal gladness: the penfive pleasures will
have

have their hour: but let not this, I pray you, be one of them."

Olivia looked round her with much solicitude. Caroline seemed terrified. Olivia appeared anxious to say something apart to her, but checked herself. "O! may her every desire be followed by obedience like mine," sighed Caroline, rising with difficulty under Olivia's support, and rejoining the wondering party. Olivia, wishing to give Caroline time to recover herself, prevailed on her friends to partake of her repast. Caroline found her terrors abate, but continued agitated.

Sensation is often too mighty for the mere appetites of nature: and, in a thousand instances, the mind asserts its dominion over our bodily frames. The collation was blessed, admired, and untasted—but the health and happiness of the fair foundress of the banquet, of the bard, and of the harmonist—of all within the domains of the castle, and the abbey, were proposed by the grateful monk, and accepted by all, in a glass of the Burgundy, which Olivia assured the company, bending over Caroline, was
part

part of the reserve which had been made for the anniversary of the day of her own honoured birth—when the assembled houses of Fitzorton and Clare, reiterated their benediction on Henry and Olivia. “It has ever,” Olivia continued, “been sacred to blest events: always consecrated to love or to friendship. It marked the day eternally respected—that gave me the hand of Henry Fitzorton. It noted the birth of our dear, dear children, and now it is brought forth to distinguish the restoration of those whom Olivia and her Henry, and their excellent brother, most honour, and most love.” When this irresistible toast had gone its round, the door of the *refectoire* was opened by John Fitzorton, who, accompanied by Mrs. Herbert and Johanna, came, he said, “to reclaim his fugitives;” not without exculpatory hints on his own rashness, for allowing Olivia to engage in such undertakings, in the immediate state of her health. Olivia, however, was too socially happy to have any fears for herself, and when Johanna
and

and Mrs. Herbert sportingly arraigned her for keeping them out of her plot, she made her peace by an avowal of her selfishness, and a promise to be more confidential in future. Johanna then conferred with the lieutenant, and the party were, by this addition, yet more interestingly blended one with the other. Caroline tried hard to rally. At length John intimated the necessity of dispersing, and undertook himself the arrangement of the separation. To the ladies who had attended him, were united Olivia and Jane Atwood, and with those he fought the castle, leaving True George, and the apothecary, to escort back the inhabitants of the abbey. "Ah! father of spirits," sighed Caroline, secretly, "if indeed a vision, what a shadow was the last?"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

BUT scarcely were the colonel and his friends departed, ere father Arthur suggested the duty of returning a general thanksgiving to the Fountain of all Good, in a less uninterrupted way, and in a yet more holy place—even in the chapel. Caroline's mystic terrors were resumed, but she still laboured to conceal them.

They all entered the chapel, prayed, and returned into the *refectoire*. Caroline, who had been much disturbed, petitioned strongly for an exclusive privilege of passing a few moments in it alone, and of paying the homage which had been pressing on her heart, ever since she had regained her father's house, and her father's love. "O! suffer me, holy Director, to offer the devotion of a daughter, to my long-neglected mother's ashes." "Not exclusively, dearest sister," said the lieutenant, "I must put in my equal claim." "On this occasion we must all assert our privilege of pious love," interposed

posed the monk, "you must allow us all to share with you this tributary offering, my dear child." The plea was too strong to be rejected, and Arthur leading the way, his party followed to the *cemetery* of the Stuarts.

Here too every awful object displayed the same hand of tender care, which had exerted itself in the chapel-house, and chapel. The lamp which, like the everlasting fire, depended from the centre of the burial place was lighted; and the coffin of lady Matilda was distinguished from the rest by an holy taper, placed on a small pillar of white marble at its head. This having been erected since their departure, every observer felt, at the sight, an awful curiosity. As they approached nearer to the pillar, they read, engraved on the marble, these words in honour of the dead:—"O, till parents, children, and the friends, who shall be found worthy of them, quitting this troubled earth, meet in the heaven of heavens, farewell! farewell!"

The groupe of friends and relatives now
I encircled

encircled the coffin, and never, perhaps, ascended to that Power, who alone can read the thoughts of mortals, a more sincere or fervent offering. Yet Caroline still looked anxiously and carefully around, as if in expectation of the vision she had alluded to—but none appeared.

They rose—embraced each other—and returned into the chapel—Caroline only lingering behind, and begging again a few moments, went back to the remains of her mother.

Her heart was furcharged with strong emotions—and there she hoped to relieve them. “O thou! who hast been the bosomed companion of thy Caroline, remote as near,” cried she, embracing the coffin fervently—“behold, once more, she returns to thy venerated relicks—returns to them with better hopes, that he, whose mistakes we have both so often deplored, shall be all thy pure spirit can wish. Haply thy intercessions for him have brought about this blessed change!—Continue them, I implore thee, till every pain of body, and error of mind,
be

be erased from the records of eternal pity!—And, O! extend thy influence to Caroline herself—to her, who, alas! too soon bereaved of thy bright example, has not yet learned the unrepining, unmurmuring resignation, which made thee, even while on earth, scarcely a being of this querulous world. Ah! endue me, immortal spirit! with a more perfect gratitude, for the varied and unexpected turns of relenting fortune which have of late attended me!—Enliven my sense of the mighty blessedness of being restored to the affections of a parent!—O! beseech the source of every good to give thy Caroline a more unmixt sensibility of the benefits she is hourly receiving from the hand of friendship—to make her more truly thankful, for bestowing on her the power of returning to this solemn spot, where she seems to commune with the spirit of her angel parent,—and for being conducted to it, when every fading power of nature warns her she shall shortly fill the space, even that whereon she now kneels—long since fondly appropriated—beside her mother's—her Matilda's ashes.”

As if by this aspiration the powers invoked had listened to her prayer and suddenly become visible, Caroline lifted up her hands towards heaven as she arose, and gazing earnestly for some time, spread out her arms as if to receive the descending object, while a more than human smile pervaded her own countenance. Then continuing her position till she seemed to feel strengthened in the conviction, it was permitted the maternal seraph to impart the heavenly promise to her child: she bowed her head in acknowledgment, and exclaimed with an exulting voice, "Blessed, blessed assurance! in its faith will I live and die!"

She joined her friends with a mind renewed, and as she returned thanks for their patient attendance, plainly indicated to father Arthur the pious cause from whence her complacence had been derived. Recovering gradually the tone of her mind, she communicated her acquiescence to the rest. She pressed them to partake with her of the repast: a pious serenity of heart was spread from one to the other, and they returned by the arched

passage to the abbey, without encountering any more impediments, real, or imaginary. "Perhaps then," said Caroline, softly to her own heart, "it was but a phantom of my brain." Jonathan who with Jerom had returned from his journey, was waiting at the abbey door eager to inform them, that when they arrived to resume their ancient position in the sick chamber, they found the Baronet in a state that appeared to them something worse than delirious: and in that condition he had left him in the care of his cousin Jerom, while he should have gone in search of the apothecary. The latter part of this intelligence was related while the persons to whom it was addressed made the utmost expedition to the Baronet's chamber, where they discovered Jerom and the old nurse, and both the attendants struggling to hold Sir Guise in their arms.

On the entrance of his friends, Sir Guise seemed perfectly to distinguish them, but in vain attempted to speak, and continued to contend with, and almost break from, the efforts of Jerom, though now assisted by Jonathan.

Jonathan. At length he was exhausted, and then seemed to have gained the point for which he had contended by covering his head in the bed cloaths. They gathered with difficulty from the broken and feeble expression of the nurse, that, about an hour after their departure, as she went down stairs at the Baronet's request to prepare some drink for which he was impatient: she only staid about a quarter of an hour while the drink was warming, and on her return up stairs saw the poor gentleman in strong convulsions, but why she could not tell.

The soothing attention of his children and their associates, each of whom joined their consoliments, at length succeeded in recovering the Baronet so far as to express his joy in seeing them.

"O! my dear children," exclaimed he, "I thought never to behold you more. The most terrible apparitions, if indeed they were not more terrible realities,—have affrighted—afflicted me;—methought they entered my very chamber, approached my bed, threatened me with the most agonizing
Q 2 death,

death, if I uttered a syllable;—then, methought two of them advanced to the head of my bed on each side, each planting a naked poniard at my throat, if I refused their requisitions.—I was in total darkness, but methought, one said to the other, we may go safely into Caroline's room: we know she is from home. I saw her"—

"Saw her!" exclaimed Arthur, looking at his friends.

"Yes," answered Sir Guise, "and therefore they swore it was the time most fitting."—"Fitting for what?" demanded Charles.—"I know not," answered the Baronet, "but I was, methought, preparing to make some answer, when, thank heaven! the two young men with the other attendant you have provided me, came to my succour. I must confess," added Sir Guise, "my thoughts had been heavily wandering; it is certain there was no appearance of any body afterwards."

"To be sure," said Jonathan, "his honour was so distracted mad with fright, that we had all enough to do to look after him:

him: so that fifty men, or devils, either, might be in the house, and we never the wiser; but when I went down stairs and waited ever so long for your honour, I peeked and potted about the premises, but saw never a living soul but little old Fitz, who had taken it into his head to come after me."

The rest of the company confirming this, it was conjectured the Baronet had been actually wrought upon, either by a distempered fancy, a fresh attack of his remorseful feelings, or a disordered sleep interrupted by horrid visions. Indeed, his weak state of body, and nerves, and his habitual fearfulness, which had still its degree of force, though his mind had of late known an unusual energy, seemed to give a colour to this supposition. The apothecary declared it was physically possible. "As to that," said Jerom, "don't you remember, cousin Jonathan, when you were one night in the clutches of the night-mare, that you cried out, the furies were hunting you with red-hot-pokers! and, as the pest would have it,

I was your bed-fellow at that time, and a fine time I had of it; and by the same token, you gave me such *kelps* in the stomach, swearing you had hold of one of 'em howsomdever, and would make him pay for the rest.—Yes, your honours, he took his own innocent cousin for one of the devils that had got into 'un, and so, no wonder Sir Guise should think he saw the incarnates who used to haunt him, which is natural;—poor gentleman, he has been hag-ridden long enough broad awake, and has at last dreamt about it.”

These remarks, with a quaint joke or two from the apothecary, threw over the solemnity of the circumstance a ludicrous air, which the apothecary and Arthur thought it best to encourage, and so well carried on, that Sir Guise himself, in the end smiled at his own chimera: the subject was dismissed by George, declaring, that he had heard much of such devil's works; and believed he had in his time seen some of them: but that he was very sure if all the imps below, with the old one at the head

head of them, were to appear before a person who was resolved to be good, and with the grace of God upon him, he might be just as safe amongst them, as if they were so many kittens." Jonathan and Jerom, however, for the baronet's more entire satisfaction, determined both to be his life-body-guards the ensuing night; and Floresco promised to sit open-eyed on the outside of his master Arthur's door, to give notice if any body approached; "Ickle Florrey used to be fright at every thing," said he, "but now only afraid of God." True George and the apothecary now went to their respective residences; the lieutenant and Caroline withdrew to their chambers, but not till the latter had tenderly assured her father she could answer for the intercession of his wife being added to that of his friends and children for every good that mortal could enjoy in this world, and angel in the next.

It is however, to be noted, that although none of the abbey party which had returned from the chapel-house, made mention to Sir Guise of any of the strange appearances

they had seen or heard in their way thither; nor, indeed, had alluded to any such fancies or facts to any of their friends of Fitzorton castle; being, on the one hand, afraid of increasing the alarm of the baronet, and on the other, too much wrought upon by the impressible realities which awaited them in the chapel-house: the circumstances could not but recur to them, while that unhappy invalid was describing their dreadful influence on his mind and imagination; nor could the whole party help thinking there was a strange yet incongruous analogy betwixt what they had themselves seen, and what Sir Guise had related: and thus, while they imputed much of the overcharged colourings, and conscious personifications of the one, to a distempered mind and body, they concluded there was more substance than shadow in what had assailed their own eyes and ears.

And in this deduction they were not a little confirmed by the report of the apothecary, as they were separating. "Had not one of the singular sights, we have seen,
put

put a sudden stop to my discourse," said this worthy man, "I was going to inform you, what I had, indeed, before mentioned to colonel Fitzorton, that notwithstanding all that gentleman's precaution, and my own, to have it supposed I was in expectation of more patients, as well as some kinsfolk of the sick quaker; and although your journey hither was performed with the utmost privacy, and you arrived at the dead of the night, a very general curiosity, concerning you, had been excited in the neighbourhood. The waggons too, and the appearance of Robert Irwin, and a more frequent resort to, and return from, the abbey, in the Fitzorton family, particularly the visits of Olivia, which could not be altogether private, much increased the mass of wild conjecture, which flew from one village to the other. Yet the superstition of the villagers, covered every thing soon after. Tribes of gypsies who, as you must remember, usually inhabited the forest, disappeared soon after their benefactors left the abbey; but of late a new set has been observed to lurk about the woods, and

hover near the house. Nay some have, as the report goes, been seen to come out of it. Now it strikes me, that the figures we saw moving, about our underground path, were some of those very gypsies, who may there, occasionally, take up their lodging, and who were possibly more alarmed at us than we at them." Caroline shook her head and suppressed a sigh.

Arthur inclined to Burton's opinion. The lieutenant said, "it was more probable that some of the friendly party at the castle, had included those seeming apparitions in the general magic of the evening, but rather did not chuse, or forgot, to mention it." "But then," said Caroline, "how are we to account for my dear father's terrors happening on the same evening? And almost at the same period? And the dreadful word, murder! None of the friends at the castle would extend the spirit of a fearful frolic to the sick chamber of him they now succour and protect. On the contrary, they would rather carry into it every amicable and soothing guest. No spirit of darkness
1 could,

could, even in mockery, proceed from them. Doubtless fancy may greatly deceive by her illusive creations. Methought I myself, very lately, saw a spirit of light—but, alas! it soon flitted away.”

CHAPTER XXIX.

IT is now the time for us to explain alarms and appearances, of a different nature, which happened, about the same crisis, at the castle, and with which some of those at the abbey are materially connected. When colonel Fitzorton was returning home with Olivia, from her interview with Caroline, thereby breaking up a very interesting conversation, he was extremely thoughtful and spoke little; but on gaining the castle he informed his fair sister-in-law, who was always terrified at the silence of John, that he had received accounts from Partington, by express, intimating Henry's resolve to return. When they got into the library, Partington writes thus, said John, presenting the following letter:

‘ Our impracticable caitiff resists all authority. He even mocks at oaths, though I have fulminated at him like an anathematizing pope. But the villain is headstrong, a bull of Basan could not stop him. I threaten to put him in double irons—but he is wife-sick, and whimpers like a great boy to go home. As ’tis plain that our little fair-faced incorrigible Olivia, alone can stop his career, I send to desire she will pronounce sentence of obedience and absence upon him, for another week or so, as I expect my brother, the doctor, from the East, and have set my heart on his staying to greet him.

‘ Most insufferable,

‘ I remain your friend.’

“ Well,” exclaimed Olivia, as she returned the letter, “ why may he not return? You must own I have been all patience and submission. But surely you have apprehended, though from the kindest motive, more than was necessary. For my part, as Sir Guise is so much better, and both his children
amongst

amongst his nurses, I think the sight of a bosom friend, and of my sweet Caroline, must be what Henry's heart could most wish, and I augur from it every good to his health, as well as happiness." "And I every ill," answered John. "I know his nature, and its limit of bearing suddenly any excess, either of joy or sorrow. Grant me another week, my dearest sister, and if at the end of that term—" "I yield up," interrupted Olivia, "wholly, my judgment to yours. It shall be so, and I will, though it feels very unnatural, issue such mandates as you think necessary, to keep far from me him, whose presence is the supreme joy of my life." "Long may he remain so!" cried John, very tenderly. "It is only that his joy may be secured to him for years, that I deprive him of hours and days." Olivia's eyes shone with grateful tears, and begging pardon for her impatience, marked with a submissive hand, the sentiments which the colonel dictated: he added some reasons of his own, confided in a separate letter to Partington, and the express set off. Olivia then

then related a plan she had sketched, in concert with Jane Atwood, to make the good Arthur's return to his beloved chapel-house, and perhaps that of Charles and their favourite Caroline, a little more fitted for their reception. "Now as all this is settled in our own minds as to what is to be done, and, indeed, almost every thing prepared, I do not ask you to take any active part on the occasion, my dear colonel, but as you know, I can fancy no undertaking of mine, however trifling, goes on well, or as it should do, till it has your sanction on it—next to the blessing of my beloved husband, and my God—and as you have thought fit to deprive me of my Henry's council, and James is absent, you must be their representative to throw out such a lure as the party may not be able to resist." She recapitulated all she had done to obey John, and expected a reward.

John Fitzorton was not the man, with all the asperity we have seen on the surface of his character, to refuse virtue its recompence; or to chill the spirit of benevolence by a frown. He smiled assent; offered every assist-

assistance; and the apothecary coming to the castle, with some good tidings from the abbey, it was resolved *nem. con.* after he and True George, the ready auxiliary of every good, to call in the two last mentioned personages as assistants. A few more words past, as to the subterraneous passage, and the couriers set off. Their conduct on arrival has been already related. But the events that, in the intermediate time, took place at the castle are yet to be told.

“ When our little project has succeeded so far as to bring the party together,” said Olivia to John, “ and they are all as happy as I sincerely hope the arrangement will make them, you can bring dear Johanna and Mrs. Herbert to see the effect. And thus every thing will be right but the absence of our Henry : for after all, it must be allowed that, no man living—no, nor woman either—could give so much grace and sweetness to a plot of this kind, the sole point of which is to soften for a moment, the wounds of the unfortunate and good.”

Scarcely

Scarcely had her ever faithful heart poured forth, audibly and ardently, this tributary effusion to its first and dearest object, ere that object made his appearance. He had been, for some time, in a cabinet adjoining Olivia's, the library where she and his brother had been conversing, and of that conversation every syllable had met his astonished ear; for although the door that communicated with the library was shut, a small window, which looked into it was open, and only a thin silk curtain parted the speakers from the hearer. The latter had, indeed, entered the cabinet very soon after the former by another, and, indeed, the usual door that opened into the library. Henry had, moreover, met the express, just as he entered the park, received his own letter, and understood from the courier that John and Olivia were both well, and, indeed, when he was called into the library, to receive his commands, "their honours seemed main merry." As Henry, therefore, met nobody either in the stables, or court yard, but

but such servants as were immediately employed there, he past directly from thence into the house, and gained the suite of apartments that communicated with the library, without being observed by any of the family. Not, however, as the reader who has long been intimate with all his feelings, and all his merits, will easily believe, with design to steal any intelligence, or purloin any secret by that ignominious method many husbands, and, perchance, some wives also, have thought a fair accommodation betwixt conscientiousness and convenience to adopt; but purely to give his return all the pleasure his generous nature would wish to impart. Happening, however, to gain his station in the cabinet just as his wife began to read Partington's letter a second time, and aloud, with the ludicrous spirit in which it was written, he sat himself down quietly to hear himself abused; but, soon finding there was going to be formed a conspiracy against him, he thought it but fair to fortify himself with as much of his *friendly enemies'* design as he could. Yet their designs were woven with
so

so many other plots of infinite concern to his feelings, that he was bound to the spot by spells more potent than any the conspirators were preparing to throw within the chapel-house, or, indeed, any which had visited, in their most mystic shapes, either the subterraneous passage, or the abbey. Every syllable that reached his ear, and not one could escape, went immediately to his astonished heart, and the whole formed a chain of wonders and of miracles, that nothing but the voice of the guileless being that revealed them, or that of God himself, could have made him credit.

Irresolute what course to take, he remained awhile concealed, after his Olivia had testified her eternal sensibility of his merit absent as present; but that fresh evidence of her generous love called forth a grateful repetition of his vows to live only for her, and with this assurance he opened the library door, and notwithstanding all he had heard ran into her arms. There, to the dismay of his brother, and to the delight of his wife, he said, that he felt himself so unjust, unkind, wicked, to be

be wandering from home when his Olivia was in circumstances that asked for the care of ALL her friends, that he traversed the wiles of his dear abusive Partington to detain him, left the Bury in an adventurous manner in the middle of the night, and left little Caroline in pledge, and a note to say, "if his friend had not had enough of him, he must follow to the abbey." The inexpressible sweetness with which Mrs. Fitzorton received these kind motives of the run-a-way; the fondling of little John who- soon came into the room, with the animated tokens of good will that sat on the face of every domestick, when the mystery of his first entry was removed by Olivia's ringing for some refreshments, and the cordial welcome of John, who, in the midst of all his embarrassments at this sudden event, was rejoiced to see the marks of so tender a meeting, gave to Henry's salutations a more than usual energy. He felt himself able to speak of the plots upon him, and to explain the fair stratagems always taken in wars, by which he had discovered them. But when he proceeded

ceeded to shew that such discovery went to ALL the family secrets they were carrying on at the castle, the chapel-house, and the abbey, and in dilating all this, that the same, or rather a more redundant, and unobstructed flow of spirit and expression, animated him, to the infinite bliss of Olivia, who conceived it very naturally to be the effect of the several causes of her own happiness, from the penitence of Sir Guise, the restoration of the son and daughter, his oldest friends, the joy of which she had so long wished him to partake—the fears even of the Colonel were, perhaps, for the first time, extinguished by some bright hopes, that, at length, the reconciling affection of the wife had emancipated the very heart of Henry from all former slavery, as effectually as a newer mistress had obtained the freedom, or rather a more lawful captivity, for the heart of Charles.

“ There can now then be no earthly objection,” cried Olivia, “ to your brother’s taking an active part in our darling plan, my dear Colonel. Nay no philosophy—I want poetry, and song, and music, and all manner
of

of things from earth and heaven. O, Henry! you could not have come back at a moment in which you and your muse, were so much wanted. I have myriads of things to tell you—a long, long, history of all that belongs to the dear persons who are now amongst us, and you shall have it all before we go, but at present Jane and I must bestir ourselves, for we have yet something to do towards our little fête—I have also to present some new friends to you here at the castle—but we will not say a word to your old ones at the abbey about your return till the exact moment.”

Imagining she saw negatives begin to cloud John's before assenting face, she caught the hand of her son, and Jane Atwood, and left the library.

CHAPTER LIV.

HENRY and John Fitzorton, were now brought together in the most critical period of their domestick history—and it was not till after they found they were thus by themselves that

that they became fully sensible of it: yet the ardour of the former, in a great degree, still marked his language and his look, and a sentiment that blessed the innocence, and unsuspecting goodness of Olivia followed the parting steps of his wife. "And thanks to heaven, and to you, she is as happy as she is good," observed John. "My dear, dear, brother," cried Henry, smiling in tears, "to heaven, and to you would have been truer language—Let us—let us—converse a little on the almost incredible events which lead to what I have just heard. Give them to me naturally and simply; just as they have been; just as they are." John managed this requisition with admirable address; he passed lightly over such parts as would, he knew, have too much interested his brother's feelings, and detailed, at length, whatever was likely to give energy, or example, to his mind. At the same time there were few incidents of importance with which he did not make him acquainted, so far as respected the penitence of Sir Guise, and the amiable conduct of his son and daughter, in their relative

tive characters, as children, and in all other particulars. He took blame on himself for excluding his brothers from the pleasure he was conscious they would have had in joining him, in his several plans, for the establishment of those who were certainly no less objects of pure love and care to them than to himself: but that, in truth, he considered himself as performing the part of guardian for the general good, and in that character thought it would turn out most for the advantage of his wards to keep them out of the trouble of very difficult and perplexed affairs, till he could see how far it would be possible to clear off incumbrances, and deferred laying before them the history of his trusteeship for their real felicity, till he could deliver with it a correct estimate of what, in such possessions, they were worth. But since it had turned out, that their worth in the tried virtue of some of their dearest friends, in the corrected vices of one of their foulest enemies, and above all in the daily, hourly, proof of the love of a sister and a wife, beyond all price, he hoped he should be
par-

pardoned. He thence took occasion to enlarge more particularly on the behaviour, and transactions of Olivia, as connected with his own in the affairs of the abbey. He shewed her commiseration for the suffering wicked, her honour of the good, her friendship for the friends of Henry, her forgiveness even of his foes, when they repented them of their enmity, and her love of Henry—a love, said he, pure and permanent, blended with every thought, wove into every action, mixed with every object, and joined with almost every word. In short, a purer, or more eloquent, appeal for penitent vice—a more generous offering to persevering virtue, or a more honourable discharge of fraternal duty, amidst private heartfelt disappointments, has rarely surpassed that which was then paid by John Fitzorton.

Henry Fitzorton had a soul to feel it. He felt it, indeed, in all points but the one which gave lustre to the rest. Of many touching, and trying features in the character and conduct of his brother, Henry was still ignorant: yet he knew enough to be convinced

vinced John Fitzorton was to be ranked amongst the first of wise, just, and honourable men, and that to him he stood indebted for the nearest and dearest obligations: and in the present instance, he felt most profoundly the generous principles on which he had acted, and saw clearly into the motives from which he had spoken; and when the narrative closed with the eulogy of Olivia, although by a thousand silent emotions he responded to all the preceding particulars, he drew the eulogist to his bosom with a fervor that after a thrice repeated embrace he dropt from the arms of a brother on his knees to God—"It is thou, thou only must I supplicate, O fountain of all power, to make me more worthy of such friends—of such a brother—of such a wife! on each, on all be thy everlasting blessing!"

"Dearest Henry," said John, while he raised him, "I am beyond all payment in your debt: your conduct is at once my rebuke and my glory. Instead of winding my way from one mystic path to another, with a

caution that might seem leading to the haunts of infamy, rather than to the recesses of innocence, and really trembling from fear of discovery at every opening of my labyrinths, as much as if I were actually carrying on a plan of fraud, I might have gone on in the straight and direct line of amity and confidence, and gained from your copartnership the same end, by more expeditious and easy means. The apology, therefore, that I have already found it necessary to make to Charles Stuart, I now repeat to Henry Fitz-orton—for every pleasure your Olivia would have shared with you on the points I have conducted, have been withheld from you by me, and I was even in the act of projecting new concealments, in order to keep you”—
“From old misfortunes,” interposed Henry.

“It remains with you,” resumed John, “to act as your judgment may decide, as to the immediate scheme at the chapel-house. It is too late to recal the invitation, and if it were not, there could no strong reason be given for the cruelty of with-holding the
pious

pious father Arthur from his offerings in the little temple, which his poor heart has consecrated; nor for checking Olivia in the glowing career of what *her* poor heart has projected. I think it, however, likely that some of the abbey family will remain with Sir Guise, and a ready reason to be given for your declining to go is"——" Brother," interposed Henry, " I am rejoiced, though surprised at my dear Charles's transfer; yet on that subject there is much to be said. The transfer to the second was made in a long absence from the first object."——" There, to be sure," answered John, interrupting the discourse,—" both you and he have had an advantage over—over—many others." The words, ' many others,' were substituted for a name that hung trembling on the verge of the speaker's lips. " Ah, my dearest John," observed Henry, " had my friend, the lieutenant, been exposed to the temptation of seeing before his eyes the scenes of his former passion,—had he possessed only the faintly imitated, the inanimate likeness of the features that first won his heart——"

heart"—“ Brother Henry,” answered John, “ it is very possible—I—know it is—a—a friend of mine was—unfortunately—once in a situation of that sort—I—therefore know it is very possible—to be in the almost constant habit of seeing, and speaking to the originals of such pictures—and whether the affections were transferrable or not—I am certain he never harboured a thought that”——The hasty, and lucky entrance of Olivia put a stop to John’s observations. She came to relate the farther progress she had made in her project—but added, she had instant employment for the muse of her darling Henry. The reader already knows the nature of that employment—and just as she had placed before him, pen, ink, and paper, and had whispered the subjects, desiring John would go down stairs with her, and leave the bard to the inspiration of friendship, Mr. Partington, preceded by a volley of accusations, set forth in his most vehement style, burst into the room, calling out, “ An escape, an escape ! the caitiff has robbed, and plundered

dered me of my treasure—taken out of my house a thing I chose to set a value on—his abominable self, and those who harbour him are as bad as himself.” “My dear railer,” said the colonel, jocularly, “I am afraid I shall be henceforth entitled to your politeness, for I have led you, amongst many others, into these strange round-about mistakes.” John then entered into some partial explanations, after which, taking the squire by the hand, he exclaimed, “And now, my good friend, if you will accompany me into the shrubbery, and grant half an hour’s patience, I will relate to you the rest.” Partridge easily saw he had heard as much as could safely be confided in the presence of Olivia, and went out with the colonel, observing, as he took off his hat with unusual civility—“yes, I begin to think you are one of my worthy gentlemen!”

CHAPTER XLI.

WHEN John Fitzorton had told his friend Partington all that it was necessary for him to know, he introduced that gentleman to his *protegees*, Mrs. Herbert, and his Johanna, assuring him they were candidates for his most distinguished incivility, and that they were as likely as any women he knew to deserve it. “O, I have not the least doubt,” answered Partington, when he was first presented,—“but I shall be obliged to set them down in my list of abominables: I see it in both their faces.” “Indeed, sir,” said Johanna, trembling, betwixt fear and hope, “you cannot think how uneasy I have been lest you should take it into your fancy to be polite to me.” “And for my part,” observed Mrs. Herbert, “I should look on myself as a lost woman were you to pay me a compliment, or make me a bow.” Partington had long since heard their general, and some of their particular misfortunes; and

and therefore, though he never saw either of them before, he clapped on his hat, which, in truth, seldom quitted his head, but to express his aversion, and walked off with them into the library, arm in arm, abusing them all the way, as an earnest of what might farther be expected. The colonel followed, and seeing the cabinet door open, they stopped there.

Henry was sitting at his desk with the pen still in his hand, Olivia leaning over, and suiting what he had written to her guitar, alternately running to another part of the library, to try it on her harp.

“Hush!” whispered Partington, “we must not disturb the rascals, I suppose, while they are in that sort of mad fit.”

The poet and musician proceeded in a subject that touched every chord of their hearts; perhaps neither of them heard the observations, or saw the observers; yet tears, which by the position he who shed them concealed from Olivia, filled the eyes of Henry, and were not easily prevented from dropping on the lines he had composed:

similar drops suffused the lovely face, and trembled in the voice of Olivia as she adapted them to spontaneous harmony: the genuine poetry of nature animated by the music of a benevolent heart. Olivia, with diffident sweetness, proposed the adoption of an epithet in one of the verses, as more auspicious to sound, but feared the sense would be injured: the sound was her own, the sense Henry's; Henry substituted, and confessed the sense was much improved. To the bloom in Olivia's cheek on this compliment, there is no description. It was the bloom of gratitude and love. Who can paint it? Henry, in turn, improving on himself, altered a thought, and gave it poetic expression. It occasioned the change of a whole distich, and its aim was to prove that the recovery of a lost treasure was a richer possession than if we had never been bereaved. "O, heaven! what an idea," exclaimed his wife, "and so it is—you mean the recovery of the little chapel-house—the treasure of Arthur's heart—it extends also to the chapel itself, and what is yet more sacred, to the

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the solemn burial-place of the Stuarts—the treasure of our Caroline's heart—Ah, how shall I give sound to this? help, help your despairing Olivia, my dear, dear Henry: let the poet inspire the musician; or, O, rather, let the fountain of every pure and bounteous idea who bestowed the thought, assist its melody: it deserves the music of the spheres, and to be sung by its angels.” “Then it should be sung by Olivia,” exclaimed Henry, rising from his chair, and folding her with enthusiasm: “none but an angelic nature can, surely, attribute to every thought, and word, and deed, the best and purest motive. By Providence, I swear, every moment of my life convinces me that I can never, never merit thee.” “Not merit! O, ingrate to that Providence,” answered Olivia, “you merit every thing that is good.”

The closeted auditory now came from their recess. They advanced even to Olivia's harp without speaking, or being spoken to. John had been weeping, and was still extremely softened; O, thought he, can it be in nature that

Olivia should love more tenderly than she is beloved!—Mrs. Herbert's bosom throbbed at the remembrance of recollected happiness—her eye insensibly turned on John; but she suffered it not to tarry. Johanna, almost shrinking from herself, timidly sighed to her own heart as she approached Olivia, "Ah! Charles, Charles! how canst thou ever fancy any resemblance betwixt thy poor Johanna and Olivia?" Partington had struggled betwixt his nature and his habits a considerable time; and as the one or the other obtained the mastery, he was now ready with an ejaculation of unmixed tenderness, or began a blessing with its inverting accompaniments—at length, he got sufficiently into his old humour to exclaim, as he took the hands of Olivia and Henry,—“I can only say, that if you do not quite murder me before I get back, I will here grant an act of oblivion to all the abominations that are past.” Partington demanded a share in Olivia's plot—“Unless,” said John, looking significantly at Henry, “you think it best that you and Partington should stay and abuse one another comfort-

comfortably at home.” “Most readily,” answered Henry, with generous earnestness—“our little gratulatory offerings are just finished, and then——” “What! not go to see and hear the effect of your sweet ode, and beautiful hymn?”—“My brother,” said John, “may be fatigued after his journey, and with his unexpected flight to Parnassus: the air for odes, you know, is very far, indeed, up the poetic mountain, sister.” “And hymns, I should think,” observed Partington, “being heavenly, can blow only from the summit;—Is’n’t it so, you clambering caittiff?” “Fatigued!” cried Olivia, responding to the humour, “O! how little do philosophers and gentlemen farmers know the unwearied spirit which poesy inspires!—But I feel the reason that induces the bard to decline honouring us with his company. He is ashamed of his musician.”—“Ashamed of her!” ejaculated Henry,—“I would shew her, with pride, to the host of heaven!” “I am sensible,” resumed Olivia, “that she has by no means done him justice—but, on a meeting of so many dear and unexpected

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friends

friends—methinks, I beg pardon.—I dare say, you are all right—but I had so set my heart on his presence—the very laurel—yea, the crown of my poor little project, else, I hope, I should not have been quite so unreasonable.”

And then, perhaps, for the first time, in all the years of their—to her, blessed—to him, alas! unhappy marriage! Olivia Fitz-orton dropped on her husband's hand, which she held to her lips, a tear of disappointment, and Henry was the innocent cause!—“Go, brother,” whispered John. “O! ever dear, too tender and too good,” cried Henry, “I thought Mr. Partington might want company—I thought that my sudden, and unexpected appearance might, perhaps, in a manner, derange the plan.”—“Or, perchance,” cried Olivia, correcting herself, “might alarm our beloved friends—Caroline is, indeed, much out of health; and her spirits have suffered. You will hardly know her, Henry, I am ashamed not to have thought of this—forgive my precipitance. It would be wrong—Yes, I see it would.” At these words she walked backwards and forwards

forwards in the room, by which she relieved not only herself but the rest of the company. John's hopes revived, as to Henry's remaining at home, and he was collecting arguments and reasons as to the propriety of that measure, on the ground of Olivia's own remarks; and Partington was gathering together a round of scurrilities to back the colonel; while Henry, with very worthy feelings, sat down to the vain attempt of finishing his poetry—In the midst, however, of his employment, which, alas! was rather that of making long, crooked marks, than legible words, he said to John—still marking, and the tones of his voice as irregular as the strokes of his pen—"He hoped Caroline Stuart was not very ill—not—not—not in any danger?" This was the only time he had mentioned her name to his brother, or any of his friends, or even given an allusion to it, except when his wife's conversation made it inevitable, since the time he intimated a wish, sanctioned by Olivia, to have some of the abbey furniture bought in for the former owners, and even then it was

by letter. John making, therefore, full allowance for a question, which tender friendship strictly warranted, he pressed the hand of Henry most affectionately, and returned in whispers a consoling answer. Olivia, after walking, had sat herself down by the side of her harp, bending pensively over it, and now and then drawing from it a saddening note. Suddenly, however, she struck the chords to happier sounds, and, looking at her friends through the spaces of her harpstrings, still enlivening the air, she paused to exclaim,—
“ I believe there is something of magic even in an instrument of music. It has, this moment, inspired me with a thought to turn all the jarring of our late objections, as to dear Henry’s being of our party, into harmonious concord.”

The rest of the company were again thrown out of their arrangements.

“ You may remember,” resumed Olivia, springing up, after pressing her lips on the harp, and protesting she loved it dearly as a friend, “ you cannot indeed forget the west door that leads from the little cypress walk

to the cemetery, and thence ascends by steps to the chapel. Of that door, knowing it is never opened but at the time of sepulture, I have not yet delivered the key, but I know where to find it in a moment. Henry and I had occasion for it several times when we were carrying on our monumental labours. There, my Henry, you may see, yet be unseen. I will drop the curtain before the door of the chapel-house, and as I mean that to be the boundary of the first evening's exhibitions to the oblivion of as much as may be of every melancholy thought that lies beyond, there will not be the shadow of a reason to shut my Henry out of a sight of the happiness to which he has so largely contributed, while we are all shielded from what we were apprehensive of before. What a lucky thought! Now don't fall into your philosophies again, dear John; and pray do you, Mr. Insufferable, stand prepared to join my brother, in escorting the ladies of the castle, when 'tis *their* cue to swell the scene. The poet I see has not a dissentient word to offer, and so the musician will go fetch the sacred key,

key, and summon Jane to conclude the preparatives." She left her associates to finish her generous plan, and left them too without a reason to check her. "That abominable villain," cries Partington, "carries all her points. After all, the lordly oak, man, is but as a switch to that little twig-looking shrub in blossom, called woman. Heigho! I should not wonder if one of these days a thing of this kind should steal the heart out of my tough old trunk. By the bye, where is that Mrs. Herbert gone? From something I saw, I take that lady to be an arrant scoundrel. Well, I'll have no hand in this matter. You are a couple of wise caitiffs, and I leave it between you. Settle it, and let me know; I'm ready for any mischief you propose." How shall it be settled, my very dear and good Henry?" most affectionately enquired the colonel, when Partington went out, "you see our predicament." "Best of men and of brothers," answered Henry, "trust me as far as I will trust myself. I am clear, even at this moment in which the pulses of my head and heart beat with a violence I can neither help nor account for, I am clear that it would

would not be in the power of any earthly being—no not the being nearest to omnipotence, in potency over my soul—to draw me from the honour, esteem, reverence, and almost worship, due to my angelic wife, and which it has long been my pride to make happiest of the happy. But I know not, as yet, my weakness or my strength, whether to consider the thronging emotions that now flush my cheek, shake my frame, and possess my bosom, as symptoms of terror, or of triumph.”

Henry manifested vehement and tumultuous agitations while he spoke. “Perhaps the sensations which are now penetrating the central mansions of my soul,” resumed he, catching eagerly the the hand of John, “may be the result only of too many surprises suddenly accumulated, and mingling together,—perhaps I only want tranquillity to arrange, select, and separate them,—perhaps—and O join me in supplicating God that it may,—perhaps the love, the virtues, the good faith, the guileless mind, of my dear, dear Olivia, may rise paramount, the unrivalled

valled victor, and lawful sovereign of my breast. Perhaps the eye, and voice, and hand, of long lost friends, will encounter mine, with gentle and salutary greeting, cordial to each, to all. Brother, I am determined on the trial, the visible and invisible method proposed is favourable. Fear me not. I will glide with the silence of death along the well-known mansions of the dead; and if I find that my hour is not yet come, for the only sort of association which the holy peace of my Olivia requires I should form with any other human creature, and which is alone what I ought to give or to receive, in that moment I will retire unheard, unseen, and never again be led into a similar temptation."

Amidst all the fiery wildness of this speech, the inconceivable rapidity with which part of it was uttered, and the fearful starts that attended much of the action, there was, on the whole, such a genuine and generous virtue in the idea, and such connexion in the plan, that John, who had been more depressed by fear than elevated by hope, now came to
a kind

a kind of compromise with those passions, and thought it best to let the proposal take place, and trust the direction of the event to that Providence, which, when human circumspection proves insufficient, and sometimes, alas! counteracts, as if in mockery, its own too attentive care, can render the dreaded circumstance the cause of producing the very effect of which shallow plotting, laborious mortals, supposed it would be utterly subversive.

CHAPTER XLII.

THUS have we explained one of the extraordinary appearances which met the eye of Caroline Stuart; giving at the same time a view of Henry Fitzorton's return to the castle; and we have unfolded these points and the incidents with which they connect after, rather than before, their taking place, that the reader might enjoy the like impression of the magic scenery of the chapel-house, unbroken by anticipations. But events, also, of great moment, happened in the house of Fitzorton

Fitzorton after these chapel-house scenes were over; and having settled those tumults of the Stuart family that fell out about the same period, this is the due place to go on with progressive circumstances.

Caroline Stuart was not the first who had bent the knee at the tomb of her mother. Henry Fitzorton had done homage there before her. But that was not his immediate devotion. When the conference betwixt himself and the colonel ended, he repaired to that hallowed spot where his own progenitors lay inurned, and where the ever-friendly Fitzortorns and Clares, united even in death, mingled their sacred dust. There, sometimes with Olivia, but oftener alone, had he directed his steps. There, would he recite the struggles of his head and heart, his infirmities, his fortitude. There, conceal his tears from the living, and, confide them to the spirits of death. His last visit was of a milder sort: he sought the ashes of Sir Armine in smiles: for he sought it to pour forth his congratulations; to assure the awful inhabitants, which surrounded him,

him, and chiefly they whom it most concerned, his honoured parents, that after struggling with solitude and society, with the powers of love and of insanity, with the rooted passion of his heart, and the horrible suggestions of murder — self murder, all, all the sad effects of one dire mistake, the constrained disposal of his hand; the virtues of Olivia, had weaned him from the fell intents of despair and death, and won him back to reason and life. He no longer loathed the earth; his heart had become susceptible of comfort; he honoured the choice which his father had made for him; he had sacrificed his own; he loved his children; his brothers were parts of his own existence; his neighbourhood was dear; and, blessed be God! he could at last survey *all* its objects without terrour. The dark cloud that seemed to cover the heavens and the earth, again admitted some rays of light, even as if re-created to his eye; it chiefly beamed from the power he still had to bless his wife; for himself, the die had been cast; the bolt would rive where it struck; he was
a wreck,

a wreck, but he had, perhaps, been the plank to save others from sinking: and he was thankful.

Such were Henry's confessions in the vault of his fathers, when he first felt the influence they describe. But motives of a still more affecting kind now drew him to those manifestations. "O, my father! my father!" cried he, in rapid and earnest supplication, kneeling by the coffins that held the relicts of both his parents; "now assist your son;—now strengthen your Henry;—let not the deep scar that has seamed the wound, be again torn open. Spare, I conjure you, the son whom your misguided,—but blessed hand, has laid long since on the altar.—And you, my mother, whose cold dust, is more precious than the vital power which warms these clasping arms, assist thy husband's prayer.—O! let not the victim who has so lately survived his sacrifice be bound again! Driven back on all he loved,—on all he feared,—alas! on all he shunned! Oh, ye spirits of heaven! who once inhabited these holy ruins, do I invoke!—and thou, O venerable father of

my Olivia! do thou become a suppliant with the God of Power in the cause of thy beloved child!—Pray alike for the husband, and the wife, and all their little ones!”

Having breathed these aspirations, he returned to the castle: there waited for him her, for whose felicity he had importuned the dead, and the spirits that live for ever. Lovely, and scarcely less pure than one of those,—she presented to him the fatal key that was to give him once more the view of Caroline Stuart. “All is on my part ready, my Henry,” said Olivia, “but surely you are unwell,—unquiet,—the approaching scene will cheer you: come, dearest, let love conduct you to friendship. You must not feel these things too strongly.” She led him to the western door, then passed hastily through the place of Sepulture, ascended the chapel, shewed him the manner how Jane and she had contrived the curtain so as to give him sight into the chapel-house, and a security from others; then after many a tender expression, went round to the other door, accompanied by her

her Jane, and with a heart throbbing with benignity, waited to confer happiness, impatient of delay, only as it retarded the communication. The cause of that delay on the part of Arthur and his friends, has been made known to the reader. On the part of Mrs. Fitzorton and Jane Atwood, it was filled by rendering their preparatives more acceptable: while Henry gliding with steps now well sustained, and now faltering, corresponding to the risings or sinkings of his spirit, alternately ruminated in the burial place, at the tomb of lady Matilda, and at the altar of the chapel.

At length, the moment came, and that moment was decisive. He heard again the sound of Caroline's voice: he saw from his secret stand her downcast eye, her fainted air, her sacred form: and he saw the change which sorrow, long-suffering, corroding cares, and perpetual vigils, had caused. He hastily descended into the burial place, and concealed his heart-felt groans, and shed his burning tears on her mother's coffin. "Soon, ah! soon, must she join
you

you here, O mouldered beauty!—but, alas! her figure has already been the prey of the tyrant. The canker of grief, I see, has eaten into the core of her heart, and with immitigable tooth is still devouring her alive!”

He returned to his place of observation. The room was filled with objects dear to his thoughts: yet he fastened but on one; his trembling eye, now deluged with tears, and now parched by a fever of the soul, fixed on, and followed Caroline. Olivia’s music was unheeded: his own poetry extinguished: all that beauty, love, and benevolence had done to grace the scene, was covered from his view as with the mantle of death.

Almost suffocated with sensations, and their proper reliefs controuled, he again descended into the chambers of darkness: he wept, supplicated, and again returned. Exhausted, at length, he sat down on one of the seats of the porch. Scarce had a minute elapsed, ere the other seat was filled also: filled by Caroline. The mourner had there attempted to weep and to pray, unobserved by the happy. Her sight was dim, and her

hands crossed over her eyes. A heavy sigh broke from her heart, and penetrated that of Henry. Alas! he was within its breath. An answering sigh heaved his own bosom; and he rose; Caroline started. Henry had moved some paces, and was half lost in the darkness of the chapel; but a faint light from the *refectoire*, by the aperture in the curtain, and the opening which Caroline had left on effecting her concealment, gleamed indistinctly on the chapel. A figure moved before her more awful, more affecting than all she had seen in the subterraneous passage. It had the motion of Henry: but in the next moment it rushed forward and was seen no more.

CHAPTER XLIII.

HENRY paused awhile in the burial place, to wish he had been numbered amongst its inhabitants, before he had witnessed the scene—from a farther view of which he was hurrying—and then past on. He reached the castle a considerable time before the rest
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of the party—before, indeed, the colonel and Partington, with the ladies, could have got to the chapel-house, in order to escort Olivia. He luckily, therefore, gained his chamber, which was that his father had used, without interruption. The very sword with which John had punished Sir Guise Stuart, hung over the chimney piece. Henry looked at it, and traversed the apartment with wild and irregular steps. On the flash of a sudden thought he closed the windows on the inside—locked and bolted his door—He took down the sword, drew it from the sheath, and examined its point—"No," said he, "this—this—may not be the instrument. The blood which was shed in defence of a father, shall not be washed out by that of a son, even though that father has made life insupportable."—He replaced the sword—but his senses were still unsettled, and the dire image of self-destruction appeared still to possess him. Perceiving a movement about the bed—he leaped up, and throwing aside the curtains, demanded furiously who dared to interrupt him? "Only little John, papa,"

papa," exclaimed a soft voice, "Your own dear little John, who has crept into your bed just to get a kiss, and a good night, from you and mamma—when you came home—as you all ran away from me, and left me to myself, a whole—whole evening, just as if I had no papa or mamma at all—which God forbid—for what would poor little John, or great John either, or even sister, with all her beauty, do without them?"

"A voice—yes, it was a voice from heaven," exclaimed Henry, running to the bed. "Dear, dear boy, you have saved your poor father—you have saved him from—" "From what papa? O! how cold you are!--do come to bed; little John shall warm you in his bosom—just thus," said the son, carrying his father's hand to his breast. "Ah! let us warm one another's hearts, papa. And I have not said my prayers yet—so we may say them together."

"And so we will, my blessed deliverer!" cried Henry, tenderly kissing the child, and laying down by his side, "and Johnny shall beg

beg of God to love—to forgive his father—and God will hear him.” “Oh, that he will, and you too, papa—for he hears all good people. I can say all you set me by heart—mamma has heard me every night since you were gone. The belief, the lord’s prayer, and the ten commandments, without missing a word—now only hark.” Hereupon the innocent prattler repeated those holy ordinances, in which Henry, with repentant spirit, fervently joined: and when he came to the inhibition of murder, an icy horror shot through his conscious heart, and as he thrice repeated the words—“O! wretched man!” he cried, “what did thy rashness meditate?—Wouldst thou have put to death, at one stroke, father, wife, children, and friends? and exposed thy immortal soul to the wrath of the Eternal?” “O! what wicked man would have killed all those, papa? Do let us say over our prayers again—to beg God Almighty to forgive him too: for, mamma says, the good should pray for the naughty, if they be ever so wicked. O! how often have I heard her pray for that

bad—bad Sir Guise of the abbey : very often, indeed, but not so often as she has blessed good papa. Ah ! how she does love papa !—not more than Johnny though.”

Saying this, the foorther threw his arms fondly round his self-rebuking parent ; drew him, by many a fold, closer to his little heart, and composed the troubled soul to sensations of piety and peace. The intercession of a spotless child was offered up for the evil thoughts his despair had induced. And after he had, again and again, supplicated the throne of mercy and of grace, the kind restorer of harassed nature sunk him to repose.

When the company returned, Olivia's first enquiries were directed towards her husband. Somewhat alarmed at hearing he had not been seen, she ran through the rooms it was usual with him to frequent, and at last coming into her chamber she found both the father and the son fast asleep in each other's arms.

Tenderly impressing a kiss, and breathing a sigh of pride and happiness on them both,
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she made her report below stairs, to the comfort of the anxious colonel, and to the satisfaction of all.

As Henry awoke he saw his brother John standing by his side. "And how fares my dear, and still good, Henry?" enquired he, with generous solicitude.

"Well—yet not good. Well—yet most wicked. But question me not to-night; in the morning I will unfold myself."

"Shall we not see you amongst us? Will not your absence seem strange?" asked the colonel.

"Let the fatigue of my journey, and subsequent walking, watching, &c. explain and excuse it. I am unequal to company at present; but if Olivia brings me a glass of wine, after your repast, I will drink her dear health in it—but not till the withdrawing hour. Meantime, I will to bed, and this blessed boy, to whom I owe more than life, must be our companion for this one night. I cannot endure the thoughts of his removal now—do tell his mother so.

See how sound he sleeps, brother. Such is the repose of innocence."

As Henry made these reflections, he caressed his son—repeated his obligations to him—took his little hand from the spot where it was laid—on his father's breast—to press it to his lips—then replaced it; while John, delighted by the effect, without knowing there was any thing astonishing in the cause—Henry being at all times an exemplary father—went down stairs, and with faithful pleasure related what he had heard and seen.

When Olivia soon after withdrew, she found that her little John and Henry had again fallen asleep, and sincerely uttering a prayer for both, including in it her absent daughter, and all the friends whom she presumed she had made as happy as herself, she crowned a day of benevolent exertion with a night of undisturbed repose.

CHAPTER XLIV.

HENRY, when he awoke, complained of an extreme head-ach, and imputed it to the heat of the apartment. Alas! the heat was in himself: for it was towards the end of October, and the air had been sharpened in the night by a frost. "It is very early, I believe, my sweet Olivia," said he to his wife, whose pure and light slumbers were easily chased away, although they had been serene, "yet I think," continued he, "that a turn or two in the garden will do me good." "I will rise and attend you love," answered Olivia. Henry over-ruled this. "Consider," said he, "I stole home to bed long before you, and it is but fair that you should be even with me: another thing is, I propose to return presently, and besides the dear boy, you see, sleeps still. Hush, we shall disturb him, poor fellow. Tell him, if he should wake before I come back, to remember me in his morning prayers, and kiss him for me a thousand times, for his
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evening ones—and O! tell him too, that I live only for himself, his sister, and his mother.”

The fondest, dearest, wishes of Mrs. Fitzorton being ever included in performing those of her husband, she begged him to guard against the early air, which however warm it might seem to him in the chamber, would be different out of doors, and then she resigned him tenderly to himself.

At the foot of the great staircase that led into the grand hall, from which there were two doors, the one commanding a view of the woodlands of the abbey, the other leading to the grounds and park of the castle through the shrubbery; he stood for a few moments, divided in his thoughts, at which of the doors to go out:—as if following the impulse of nature, his first movements were towards that which led to the mansion of Sir Guise Stuart: yet turning from thence abruptly, even while his hand was upon the bar that fastened it, he hurried to the one which led into his own grounds, as if in obedience to the dictate of duty and reason.

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But he was much surprised to observe, either that some one of the family had gone forth even sooner than himself, or that his servants had been very negligent, for the door was not only unbolted and unlocked, but very slightly closed.

He entered the park, crossed into the shrubbery, and walked up and down the first path that presented itself. His mind crowded with thought,—a mist blending with the frost, had rendered objects dreary and indistinct. Every drooping shrub, and every flower in the train of autumn were loaded with heavy dew half dissolved and half congealed. As the hasty steps of Henry brushed them away, he exclaimed—“Yes—all nature is in tears!” he sighed and passed on. The sun rose, and gradually dispersing the fog, displayed the later beauties of the year more clearly, but shewed them in their decline. Henry, after exercise too violent for either felicity or health, stood leaning against an alcove on the outside: he saw the withering leaf fall alike from the loftiest tree, and the most lowly shrub—“Such is man!” thought

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he, "and such the equal fate of the ambitious and the humble!" As his eye surveyed the different objects within its reach, and beheld on all the visible signs of sickness and decay: "All nature is dying," cried he aloud—"see! even at the point of death! then what is man!"

"Immortal!" answered a voice immediately from behind the place where he stood. It was the voice of John Fitzorton. The brothers embraced. "For once," said the colonel, "my dear Henry, I am a more early wanderer than yourself. My night was unquiet, but, I trust, your's was sweet: and yet the remarks I heard you just now make, or rather the tones in which they were expressed, seem not the result of a refreshing sleep."

"Dearest brother," cried Henry, "if sleep, which is but for a night, is sweet, what must be the sleep of death?"

"Still sweeter," answered John, "for that is eternal waking—I have wholly recovered the tone of my mind, Henry, since I came into the garden. Observe the wide spread-

spreading ravage of the vegetable world as it lies around us in ruins."

"I have observed it with a sinking heart, and it has made me descend, atom as I am, into a more modest sense of my own insignificance, brother," said Henry, with an air of self-abasement.

"And my heart, on the contrary," resumed John, "it has elevated from this low earth to the heaven of heavens—from things perishable to powers that shall never know corruption—from my decaying body to my everlasting soul. That proud oak, my brother, may, in this poor world, maintain its station far longer than its lord, even though the honours are now falling from its top, but when its very roots shall be trampled into dust, by the power which putteth all mortal things under his feet, I trust, in the pardoner of offences, and the recompencer of virtue, that Henry, John, and James, Fitzorton, and all who are dear to them, will be rejoicing in the unfading bliss of eternity. Be proud then, my brother; ascend to the dignity of yourself—

self—rise to the sublime height of your own nature.”

The eyes of Henry were streaming with tears, yet they were raised to heaven, and, “O!” he cried, “it is from the pardoner of offence! not the recompenser of virtue! that Henry must have hope in death.—My brother,” continued he, “I am weak as childhood—but, alas! without its innocence! Yet what have I not attempted—what will I not attempt to fulfill every duty—to avoid every snare? O thou my brother, and my friend—thou christian—philosopher—guide and conduct me back to scenes of less agonising thought, and keep me there.—Forbear, ah, still forbear to question me. I have kept within the conditions. I ascended from the gloomy repositories of death, and saw the one created being most afflicting, most dear to sight—saw her scarce living—about to be numbered with their cold inhabitants, yet I did not rush into her presence. I felt her heart-sick sigh upon my cheek. I saw her sink almost at my feet—yet raised her not to my

my arms—but left her—left her on the cold ground, and with savage speed rushed from her fainting form. You had my promise, and it has not been broken. So far virtue and my brother are obeyed. But I must move again from hence. Beings far, far more valued, more valuable than myself, demand it—my wife! my dear wife! my children! my friends!—yet I know not how, or where—nor can I think—O think for me!—Something, and speedily, must be done, or all must be lost—this throbbing head, this panting heart—all—all—foretell it!”

He clung round his brother's neck—then started from him, and then again enfolded him—now incongruous, now coherent, as he spoke—and woman's love, no, not the love of his Olivia, could more fondly return his embraces, soothe his wandering, pity his weakness, or confirm his hope, than did the rugged John Fitzorton in this trying moment. He kissed his cheek, wiped away the tears he found upon it, yet bathed it with his own. “Ah, my unhappy Henry, my dearest, and still good, brother—virtuous even in agony:

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yet, O! be comforted, think on the more disastrous wretch—alone and hopeless—to whose sad fate I pointed in our late conversation, shut for ever from his object, by bonds yet stronger—bonds which even death could not remove—yet forbid the privilege of escape, and condemned by inexorable necessity—even by virtue—strange mysterious fate! to see her for months, for years, the only form that could ever truly enchant his eye, to hear the only voice that was ever music to his ear—not like the voice of the Syren that once lured and betrayed,—and to observe the only mind which has ever conveyed to his idea the most perfect image of truth and goodness; ah, think on him—on him, not culled from fancy's painted store—but one, whom I have known, a real victim, and had you known him too, you would have wept his sorrows, and if not forgot your own, have owned that they were blessedness to his. Indeed you would. Yet never, never shall she know the cause of his despair.”

All

All the powers of wonder and of pity seemed suddenly to overspread the face of Henry! and as he examined the countenance of John, with an earnestness he had never looked into it before, retiring gently from his arms, he appeared to puzzle awhile betwixt conjecture and discovery, and then run again into his brother's embraces.—“*Shall* she know!” exclaimed the astonished Henry! “Is he still existing? still one who sees that form, who hears that music, who observes the workings of that heavenly soul?—then is he a wretch indeed! O brother, I should commiserate that man were he a villain! but were he good, and just, and virtuous, even such a man as thee, my brother, I should mix adoration with my pity, and do homage to him as to a wounded god, could ought of divinity receive a wound!”

Henry appeared to be sinking from his brother's arms, and had bent one knee on the ground as he ceased speaking:—even as though he thought his closing words applied: but John hurrying him up, as if not unconscious of his meaning yet more than he expressed, cried
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with a voice of some trouble, "Hush, brother, for heaven's sake hush: we are observed!"

"Yes, indeed," said little John, who came running up the alcove walk, followed by Olivia, "you can come into the garden to hug my uncle, Mr. papa, but leave poor mamma and I to ourselves."—"I am come here, my dearest Henry, to invite you to a dish of coffee, which, on account of your early rising and walking, may do you good, so I got up to make it myself; and if the colonel has been as early a rambler as yourself, it will be of service to him likewise."—"Nor shall it be refused my ever good Olivia," said Henry, "I will answer for us both: and this blessed boy shall partake,—yonder too, I see Partington and his ladies. Let us lose no time then."

A tranquil, nay, a pleasant breakfast ensued, even to the surprize of Olivia herself, who, from little John's perplexed account, and the last night's discourse, and from her own morning observations, had her fears that Henry was again out of health or spirits.

John

John was at first the most taciturne on this occasion of the whole party, but resumed himself in the course of the repast; and Henry, from whatever motive, was for the whole of that day, more tranquil than he had been at any period since his last arrival at the castle. Partington, whose spirits were always elated or depressed by the fair or foul weather of those he loved, now found the Fitzortons, who had long been his grand barometers, more calm and temperate, than from the late stormy violences he had reason to expect; he therefore gave a loose to his accustomed scurrility, mixed with a thousand good humoured turns, with such effect, as settled him in the best opinions of Johanna and Mrs. Herbert, who, on their part, contrived also, by their endearing behaviour to Olivia, to be set down amongst his most atrocious incorrigibles.

CHAPTER XLV.

ON the day following, however, the tempest, which had thus blown over, returned: it had rolled to a distant quarter, but rolled back to its point. Henry, in great disorder, sought a second conference with John. "My brother," said the former, "there is no bringing all men's minds, any more than their persons, to an equal size, or strength. I honour the greatly good and greatly suffering being, who lives unsubdued by temptation; but I cannot reach his virtue; I cannot profit by his example. I will not disgrace myself or distress you by telling you where these truant feet, guided by my erring heart would have led me in the twilight of yesterday, when, you remember, I petitioned for, and obtained a solitary hour."

"To the abbey, no doubt," answered John, much discomposed. "Fatal was the hour in which my erring heart conducted thither its old inhabitants. You have paid them a visit,

visit, I presume, and in one moment brought to nought the laboured project of many a diligent hour. Shallow thoughted mortals! behold, here, another lesson to humble the pride of human foresight! I am fallen with the fabric I raised, and shall bury my friends, brother, sister, and all whom I would have saved, in the ruins!"

"O no, my brother!" answered Henry, "you have erected a temple to pity, friendship, honour, and, I trust in God, to happiness! I, and I only, feel myself unworthy to enter its sacred gates and do homage there! Mistake me not—weak, fragile as I am, I have not invaded, by willing rashness, the sanctuary where your generous hand has placed the penitent and the mourner. But, blushing I confess, that I bent my misguiding steps that way:—Yes, I took a forbidden path, the one rarely trodden,—and yet, even there, I met my dear, my long lost"—

"Caroline!" said John. "No, her brother," said Henry. "I am sorry for it," observed the colonel, "the lieutenant was rash, and forgot the bounds prescribed;
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the bounds of honour."—"Within those bounds I saw him," answered Henry. "Then the rashness was yours. Yet you said, you had not intruded." "Nor did I, the rencontre happened in a place where I could expect to meet only the form of melancholy;—the subterraneous passage.—Even there my friend rushed upon me unawares from an angle almost at the cavern's mouth. So far from expecting, he furiously seized my throat, demanding the name of the lurking ruffian, the midnight robber he had at last detected? A drawn sword was in his hand,—and, in the next instant would have been in my heart, had not the well-known voice and name of Henry Fitzorton arrested the stroke. 'O gracious heaven! I should have murdered my friend, my dear, dear Henry Fitzorton!' ejaculated he in an agony, and as he spoke, a groan.—No doubt the work of terrified fancy seemed to sound near the place where we stood. He threw down the instrument of death, and pressed me to his bosom. My friend was in my arms. 'I ask not, O, my Henry!' said he, the

‘ the state of your heart,—you, no doubt, have heard the state of mine: but if your’s be not all Olivia’s, or, even if it be, forbear, I conjure you, to invade my sister’s peace!’ He then hurried to other subjects, talked to me of fearful sights, of frightful sounds,—told me that such an air of mystery had there invested the abbey, both within and without,—he was himself that night come forth armed to attempt a discovery, and had encountered strange appearances, which eluded his pursuit. He informed me that Jerom and Jonathan, with the intrepid Arthur and his fearless Floresco, were also on the watch in their different stations. He concluded, alas! by giving me credit for virtues I have never possessed; applauded my considerate, my god-like benevolence, as he called it, in administering comfort to the wretched, myself unseen: and then ended by observing, that as the prosperity of his family had been derived from the kindness of John, so would the peace of his sister, dearer than all other possessions, be protected by Henry Fitzorton!—Ah! my beloved brother, I
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could only answer by ardently straining him to my bosom; pouring out my blessings on his house; on my knees avowing, that if the power were mine, I would watch and combat for years unwearied to repel its enemies,—and then, alas! unequal to farther converse, I ran back with trembling steps from the cavern into the forests, disguising my agitation in sudden illness, and yet, heaven knows, that was not counterfeit.—Behold the history of my unsought trespass;—behold, dear John, and prevent its repetition. I have lost all confidence in myself; others, therefore, should not trust me.—O! think of some means to save me then from myself. Your plan for that safety shall be mine.”

“Generous Charles, and worthy Henry! I trust a fair reward awaits ye both,” cried the colonel.—“Your narrative, brother, has filled me with various objects for reflection; but the one which more immediately presses, is that which regards yourself—the grief of this poor, conflicting bosom.” Here John, in his usual way, sat himself down to solitary
thought,

thought, while Henry perceiving his son at sport in the garden, went to his little comforter and preserver, as now he called him, hoping to gain composure enough to bear such endearing society before he returned to his wife.

Although the time advanced more near when Olivia would naturally require and receive the tenderest support from the attentions of her husband; yet, as it was altogether improper to convey her, at such a moment, from her comfortable home, where all had been long ready for, perhaps, one of the greatest trials of human nature, even though human kind is thence continued on the earth; yet, as the pressure of unforeseen events and surrounding circumstances, had made the environs of the castle and the abbey more perilous to all the inhabitants even than they had ever been before; and, as on every possible ground of discretion, Henry's virtuous and manly proposition ought to be adopted, it was settled by the good colonel, that his brother should again be stolen by Par-
tington—that little John, in order to be ex-
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changed for little Caroline, who was still at Bury, should be of the runaway party;—that Mrs. Herbert should be trusted with the scheme; and that just as it was about to take place—the coach at the door, and trunks packed—John should betray the conspiracy, and undertake to bring about Mrs. Fitzorton's consent.

This arrangement was only part of what was forming in the colonel's mind. He believed that now Sir Guise was much recovered, the whole abbey family might be removed, at least, beyond the track, and out of the observation of his brother: and this, he thought, would be a wise measure, free of all other considerations, as it would convey them from a spot surrounded with dangers. He imagined Henry might then come back, and that while his worthy mind was employed, as he well knew it would be, in the soothing offices of which his Olivia would then stand in need, he should have no aching void left for the division of a wandering image: and, indeed, he began to think it would be best for the castle family to settle
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elsewhere, when such a measure could safely be proposed.—All of this plan, which was then proper for Henry to know, was imparted. Henry yielded, and was much soothed by the idea of little John being his companion—“and yet, alas! my brother,” sighed he, “what have I to hope from the preservation of a few days, or months, or even years!”

“Every thing, even from a few hours,” answered John. “The evil which has been growing for half the life of man, may, by the Providence of God, be in a moment removed. Let us rely on that Providence, and, by taking what at least appear the best measures, hope, that they will be directed to that end.” Henry sighed, and assented.—Partington was ductile to every generous aim. All was prepared with secrecy and dispatch; and while Partington was handing his party into the coach, railing and raving in whisper—the colonel, who had been conducting his impeachment, and detailed his charges, brought round Mrs. Fitzorton to assist him in apprehending the conspirators.—

“ I seize you ladies and gentlemen,” said John, “ in the name of Olivia.” “ O thou most incorrigible good-for-nothing traitor !” exclaimed the Squire, bundling in little John, who enjoyed the scheme at his heart ; and seeing Johanna with Olivia, “ I have a good mind to have that handsome hussy into the bargain.” Then shutting the door, after he had leaped in himself, he flourished his hat, crying—“ aha ! this is trick for trick ! one runaway job for another. Let the rascal see if he can escape again—I have him now, father and son, old dame Partlet, and the family-coach into the bargain—Drive on caitiffs—drive on, and never stop till you get to the end of the world.”

The postillions, setting it all down as a new frolic of their old squire, who was a great favourite with them all, obeyed orders, and away they drove. But tears stood in the eyes of Olivia.—“ It is but for a day or two—and to bring back my sweet little niece, and Partington’s brother, the physician, who is daily expected at the Bury, from the East-Indies, and, in short, to strengthen and en-

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given our party on their return—and so e'en let them go, dearest sister," said the colonel. "Well then," sighingly, answered Mrs. Fitzorton,—“we must endeavour to do without them a little; but still I know not the time when I could so ill spare them.”—

“Would to heaven I could any way render the loss of their society less irksome,” said the soft and diffident Johanna; “but, perhaps, the good lieutenant, and—should the baronet's health permit—that of Caroline might do much.”—“Truly, sweet maid,” answered Mrs. Fitzorton, “if any thing in nature could fill the void which the absence of my husband and children always leaves, the consolations you propose to me would have their effect; yet, under the most gloomy sensations, such society must be most welcome to my heart.”

“I will myself go to the abbey,” said the colonel, “and make report how far our society may be admissible.”

CHAPTER XLVI.

HAVING thus, in some sort, reconciled both the ladies under his protection, John Fitzorton directed his steps to the abbey, where, however, many objects of increasing difficulty remained to be adjusted. For, although the generous conduct of his unhappy brother, the tender display of the true and modest feelings of Johanna, and his own still unyielded power of mind, had softened the past scenes, the prospect of the future rose to his view, convolved in clouds, the dispersion or even clearing of which seemed to require an energy greater than any he had yet employed.

To him, therefore, who can bring light out of darkness, he breathed an earnest prayer as he took the way that led to the abbey: for John Fitzorton was not a convert to that weakly proud doctrine which depends wholly on human means; but always thought,—and as he thought—he acted, the
philo-

philosophical, enlightened, and ennobled christian character. As he proceeded towards the abbey, he encountered Burton upon the back of his little horse Busy, posting to the castle. The whole detail of the apothecary immediately described the terrors under which his patient laboured, in consequence of the illusive appearances—adding thereto an account of those which he and his friends had seen in their way to the chapel-house.”—

“ I know nothing about such ghostly fancies,” cried John; “ but the sooner your patient and, indeed, all his family can get from them the better. In a word, my friend, I am projecting a general remove; for as matters have turned I see no tranquillity either of soul or of body, in this once peaceful and happy neighbourhood, at present: our first operation is on Sir Guise Stuart; if we can but get him by any means into a travelling situation, I think, I still see a path out of all our perplexities. Burton declared he had hopes, if no new phantasms and disturbances, real or imaginary, fell out, a few more nights’ rest would give to his patient,

and to all the family, the degree of strength necessary to the occasion.”—“ Meanwhile,” answered the colonel, rejoiced at this intelligence, “ as you must know, Henry has been hurried back to the Bury by Partington, the limits of our poor prisoners at the abbey may be enlarged; and to that purpose am I now going to the abbey; but since we have met, you, my good friend, will best settle this matter, while I return home to make preparations for the general movements.” The apothecary answered, that he would lose no time in setting the captive brother and sister free, turning round the nimble Busy, and galloped back to the abbey.

But neither Charles nor Caroline were in a situation to enjoy even the blessings of liberty. For scarce had Henry exchanged the mournful, but affectionate adieus with his friend, in the subterraneous passage, ere the terrified Francisco came to implore the lieutenant to follow his steps; then led him some paces farther along the cavern, where an object assailed his eyes, that almost reduced

duced him to the condition of that object. He saw his beloved sister stretched on the cold ground, and in a swoon. Fain would he have numbered that heart-piercing sight also amongst the visions that seemed to hover around, but, alas, it was the real Caroline, and the groan which struck the doubtful ears of Charles and Henry, was hers.

Impelled by her apprehensions on the delay of the lieutenant, and auguring ill from his enterprize, she had impulsively explored the winding paths of the cave, and she reached a part near which her brother had taken his station, even as the words—"murdered! Henry Fitzorton! my dearest friend!" were bursting from his lips. She fell lifeless at the sound—and when somewhat restored, finding herself supported by her brother, she exclaimed, "what murdered! dead!"—her senses still wandering—"Your friend!—Henry Fitzorton! murdered him! it was then a warning voice—a warning shade I heard and saw in the chapel—O God! O God!"

The dreadful image again weighed down, and closed every faculty, and again she fainted in the lieutenant's arms. She was deaf to all his explanations. Meantime, Floresco had summoned father Arthur, and his party to her assistance, and by them she was conveyed, even as if the hand of death were on her, back to the abbey. In vain did the lieutenant assure her the words she heard were only part of a sentence, the object of which went to congratulate himself that he had escaped the dire murder which impended. She was beyond all sense of hearing, and remained so for many hours. At length her struggles terminated in sleep; finding, when she awoke, that she was in her own chamber, with her kind attendants, to which were now added both the apothecary's daughters—sitting round her bed, and the still faithful, still favoured little Fitz reposing on his carpet at her side, and the lieutenant anxiously waiting the moment to explain, the whole appeared to have really been the effect of her late distempered fancy in sleep. “Yes, it must be a dream,” said she,

she, "but the most terrible that ever fancy teemed with—has any thing happened my good friends?"

"No, dearest Caroline," answered Charles, unwilling to hazard more until she was more able to bear even happy tidings—"And is all well here, and elsewhere?" questioned she. "All," replied the lieutenant, "our father mends fast—we hope to see him down stairs soon." "Indeed!" said Caroline, smiling, "and are none of our friends, or benefactors come to any thing grievous?" "None," said the lieutenant—"What nobody murdered?"—"Heaven forbid!" answered the lieutenant, and just as he was going to unfold the cause of her fears, she exclaimed, "Then certainly it was a dreadful dream, and I will try to think of it no more." Burton was of opinion that at present it would be best to let that idea continue; observing, that by the time it was chased away by a connected recollection of circumstances, more happy effects would be derived from their developement. This plan was, therefore, adopted, and the several confidants received

a charge from the lieutenant, not to hint the subject until, if ever that should be the case, it was brought forward by himself; and even then," said he, "father Arthur, or I had better relate it."

The connected recollections, however, soon came to the mind of Caroline, when, at her desire she was left to herself: every dreadful sound was repeated to her ear, and smote her heart: "Yes," said she, "it is beyond dispute Henry Fitzorton is murdered!—and, O heaven and earth! his bosom friend!—my brother! some dire mischance! it could not be design! my brother has been the murderer—it was in that place of delusion and darkness!—O, most terrible to thought! yet, alas, there remains not a hope! it could not be a dream, that, agonized by suspense, I left my father's apartment—wandered forth into the ruins, and entered the cave of—death—of murder—murder—of the noblest, best of beings—and, alas, ere this, perchance, of thee poor widow, Olivia.—Rash, dreadful deed! and the wound will be mortal also to him who gave it.

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Will Charles put Henry to death, and survive the blow? impossible! let me not reproach him—ah, rather let me try to soothe, to comfort, to reconcile him to life—to life! and can that be made supportable to the murderer of Henry Fitzorton?”

These images gained strength from reflection, and from after-observations. She perceived the lieutenant assiduously waiting an opportunity to unfold himself; she remarked that, on her observing him with unwonted scrutiny, he appeared to shrink from her inspection, and yet that he laboured to communicate. She found that he even began a kind of tale, and then broke it off abruptly; and although this proceeded but from an observance of his own plan, presettled betwixt him and Burton, she referred it all to the one point most horrible; and thereupon, not doubting but that her brother was the victim of conscious misery, she resolved on her part, not to renew the subject in his presence, but, if possible, to mourn it in secret. Accordingly, whenever a word or look from any of her attendants, or from the lieutenant

lieutenant, escaped, that might tend thereto, she indicated by an immediate change of discourse that it was unwelcome to her : and as it was hence supposed to be her wish there should be no revival of the circumstances, it was agreed upon by her friends never more to advert to them. But what farther established Caroline in her full belief, was the never having seen any of the Fitzorton family since the supposed event. " Alas," said she to herself, " they are all deeply mourning the calamity, and shun, more assiduously even than before, these ever ill-fated walls."

Her former distresses, acute and manifold as they were, the loss of her father's love, the disappointment of her own heart, even the untimely fate of her ever-honoured, and lamented mother, all seemed less heavy to her sinking soul than the death of Henry Fitzorton.

Yet she did not allow even this bitter aggression to interrupt the duties which still called her towards her father ; the moment she could rise from the room to which her fatal
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misconception had confined her, she passed her time, as usual, in the chamber of Sir Guise. Her cares this way, at least, were attended with a success that carried a ray of consolation to her heart, even in the zenith of its despair. Sir Guise daily gained strength; a time was fixed for his leaving his chamber, and Burton pronounced that he might venture in mid-day to air himself, under the support of his son and daughter.

Penetrated by this cheering information, Caroline exerted herself to the utmost, not to throw a cloud over this prospect! Sir Guise had more than once asked after the miniature of his injured wife, and Caroline took it from her bosom, and he pressed it to his lips. She led him into her own apartment at his strong urgency, and when his eye caught the family picture, he knelt down to it and wept. He recognized in the furniture several of those very objects which had rent his conscious heart at Robert Irwin's; the sight of them now excited emotions less terrifying, but more salutary. His feelings were still wounded by reflection, but
not

not harrowed by remorse ; yet he was conveyed back to his apartment in a state to move the pity of a foe.

Nevertheless the morning found him again refreshed. In this situation of affairs, the lieutenant, who had received instructions from colonel Fitzorton to watch the first favourable opportunity, told Caroline, not without the difficulty, however, which the first suggestion of such an idea to his sister, in her circumstances, would excite, that he had some thoughts of proposing to Sir Guise a change of air. " Indeed," said he, " I am of opinion, we ought all to quit the neighbourhood — and an occasion offers, by means of a friend, for its being done almost immediately, and with the necessary caution — and that carriages have been some time in readiness : " — " Carriages !" exclaimed Caroline. " Yes," said the lieutenant, " so many sad events and strange matters environ, and are hourly happening in this place, that, methinks, we cannot leave it too soon — and leave it for ever !" " Think of it, my sister," said he, and left her.

If there had wanted a confirmation of the murder, this would have supplied it to the trembling Caroline. "He would fly from the spot where the blood was shed," thought she! Her own blood froze in her bosom.— "But blood calls for blood," exclaimed she. "Alas! perhaps, my brother's own life is in danger!" Roused by this thought, she ran to the lieutenant, and eagerly, yet fearfully whispered, but without confessing her suspicions, "that she would be ready at any hour, but that if it should be thought more safe for him to go first, she would follow with her father the instant he was able, and a secure place should be found. She spoke in great disorder, and as the lieutenant was going to answer, came an immediate summons from Sir Guise, whom the messenger reported to be dying. Every power of Caroline's soul flew to this point: she forgot that she had another cause for grief in the world.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE baronet was labouring under an internal malady, notwithstanding all appearances, and though it had not, hitherto, stopped the great functions of life, had been undermining his constitution by a slow, but consuming progress. After a whole day of composure, during which his pulse, eye, and appetite gave, to general spectators, every hope of increasing convalescence, he dropped into a lethargic kind of sleep, in the midst of which he rent the air with the most piercing shrieks, succeeded by long heavy groans that terminated in sighs and tears.

The paroxysms became more and more frequent, impairing at each return, every power of body and of mind. In truth, the conscience of this unhappy man was aroused beyond the power of being appeased by the usual propitiations. It was the never-dying worm which sensibility of crime had, at length, lodged in his bosom — and in his moments

moments of reflection so penetrated and devoured his heart, that he was, perhaps, in the only tolerable state when every ray of intellect was quenched in delirium. In both these afflicting situations Caroline remained a martyr to her vigilance, and want of exercise as well as of repose; she seemed, indeed, fearful that the slightest movements might disturb him. She doubled the carpeting—intreated that her brother, the apothecary, and every attendant in their going up or down stairs, might step as lightly as possible. With her own hand she once more administered his medicines, and smoothed his pillow, and the least creak of the door went jarring to her heart. In a word, every thing which a good and gentle nature could devise, did this affectionate daughter practise in her father's sick chamber; though sick herself almost unto death.

At Burton's particular request and intreaty, a consultation of two neighbouring physicians was held on Sir Guise, whose unusual calm, and apparent tranquillity, had been
more

more dreaded by the apothecary than the former violences; the latter indicated, at least, muscular force, but the former denoted exhausted nature.

With very little variation he continued in this condition four days; in the progress of which he exhibited, at moments, such unequivocal marks of shame, contrition, and self-abasement, joining fervidly in the offices of which the pious Arthur made him partaker, that those whom most he had wronged would have felt their resentments buried in their charity. Alas! those whom he had most injured were, indeed, more immediately under his eye, and most assiduously engaged in offering to comfort him;—for Charles Stuart, though less constant in his attendance than Caroline, was equally earnest in trying every power to conciliate him to himself, to diminish his fear, and enlarge his hope.

But one outraged being there was who had not yet met his corporeal eye since the arrival of his son and daughter, though in mental vision he had

had nightly, almost hourly, beheld her, and while he blessed her name, he execrated his own—the interesting, the good, the lovely and all-forgiving Jane Atwood, a sincere penitent like himself, had not yet been seen since his illness, though thrice that amiable girl, prompted by the truest goodness, had been conducted by True George to the ante-chamber, from whence, when occasion favoured, she entered the apartment, while the unhappy man reposed; then, after gazing until she could endure, for pity's sake, to look no longer, she would steal away, lest the sight of her should encrease his pangs; but still remained in the ante-chamber, either until he again dropped to sleep, or tidings of his health were brought by the lips of Caroline, or her cousins, or caught by her own listening ear. At length the hour of Sir Guise Stuart approached; but it had advanced gradually, and as it came more near, it moved towards him with more tranquil steps. The forlorn state, above described, had relaxed its horrors, and for some weeks,

reason once more visited his mind, which, though the animal frame continued to waste away, permitted the man, covered with conscious crimes, to feel even in this world the blessed influence of penitence unfeigned. The deep-toned groans, and heavy elaborations of the breath, yielded benignly to the milder sorrow of silent tears, or of sighs, which rather relieved than aggravated his conscious heart. The death of a sinner was coming on, and in its progress furnished an important example to the wicked, of just distributions both of reward and punishment, in the present world. As the first months of his sickness and confinement had past in the sharpest pains of body and of mind, in the direst retrospects of the past, torments of the present, and tremendous apprehensions of the future—in the returns of rationality, mitigated only by temporary distraction—in all the agonies of waking consciousness, or in the no less terrific visions of haunted slumber; so when the ministers of heavenly justice had fulfilled the

sterner part of their commission, and the heart of this modern Pharaoh was no longer hardened, but melted to the degree of ductility that is necessary to save the soul alive—then those ministers, like spirits of mercy, wore to his eye a less vindictive form, breathed into his ear less despairing sounds, and on the wounds that yet lacerated his bosom, distilled some drops of celestial balm.

The knowledge of Jane Atwood having been already his visitor, had been withheld from him only by the tender Caroline, who feared, from his extreme distress on the mention of her name though so frequently repeated by himself, her presence might prove too much for him to bear. At his reiterated and earnest intreaty, however, as well to his son and daughter, as to Jonathan, Jerom, and to True George, the latter hastened to the castle for his beloved. Jane Atwood soon made her appearance before Sir Guise Stuart, who had desired to see her alone.—On her entrance he shook violently.

After

After gazing on her earnestly for some time, his eyes closed in a shudder of his whole frame—amidst the shock of which, outstretching his arm, and pointing to heaven, he confusedly uttered the words—“ Injured being, forgive—forgive—and pray for me there !”

He remained in that position some moments, when recovering vision, and observing Jane kneeling at his bed-side, complying with his request by fervent prayers, in which she was joined by all present, he signified by a movement of his lips, and placing his hand on his breast, a faint smile attesting the action, that he was much comforted.

He then desired his children might be summoned : and being told they were both in the room, he turned his view to the other side of the bed, and there saw them engaged in the same intercession. Arthur and his Indian united their supplications. Alarmed by the tidings of George, Olivia, Johanna, and colonel Fitzorton had followed Jane,
they

they seated themselves awhile in the ante-chamber, and then entered the apartment. Every eye and hand was upraised to the throne of the Merciful; Sir Guise, after many vain efforts to lift his hands to the suppliant posture in which he saw theirs, desired Caroline and Charles to raise them; at length using all the force which parting life allowed, the dying man, amidst almost whispered sighs uttered the words—"Receive, O God, the soul of a penitent!"—and expired.

A silence of the most solemn kind, notwithstanding the strong and distinct interest in which the event was felt by almost every spectator, distinguished this scene; even till Sir Guise had pronounced the sentence that terminated his existence: and then, as if by an unanimous feeling, that sentence, expressive at once of the prayer of the dead, and the pardon of the living, was repeated by every one present.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE presence of mind which Caroline displayed in the foregoing scene, exhibited also that rich trait in her character, which has emboldened us to believe she may safely be proposed as an example to her sex, in whatever trials they may be called upon to undergo in the exercise of filial virtue. But to the discharge of this last duty she was summoned, in a moment of the utmost severity; her bosom laboured with a sense of the strongest evils that could perhaps be inflicted on humanity,—loss of the only being who had ever touched her heart, reflections on his supposed tremendous fate, the terrors she felt for her brother's forfeited life, and the death of her father.—The expiring moments of sir Guise, it is true, less touched the heart than those of his blameless wife, yet, perhaps, the circumstances of a wicked life terminating in a penitent death, has something more awful in it to the soul, even than the departure of an innocent being. The several spectators seemed

seemed to be sensible of this. The tutored Indian's earnest prayers for himself, unmixed with those which he offered up after the decease of sir Guise, were prayers that he might not be guilty of wicked deeds. True George found it necessary, with the assistance of Jerom and Jonathan, to convey Jane Atwood to the castle; and at length Arthur and the lieutenant conducted Caroline in solemn silence to her apartment, where Burton and the physicians who had attended sir Guise, requested she might be left wholly to herself: a request which, from observations they had made, was particularly enforced, and in which with all the strength that rested with her she earnestly joined; assuring, however, her brother as he left the room, but still in a fearful whisper, that the only wish she now had in the world was, to see him out of danger. "Then she still labours with that cruel apprehension," said Charles, following the apothecary and physician to the chamber door. "What apprehension?" questioned the physician. "Tell it below stairs," said the physician, drawing

drawing the lieutenant out, and gently closing the door.

Meantime reports were made at the castle of the last moments of sir Guise Stuart, by True George, to the infinite confusion of John Fitzorton, whose project to move away the abbey family, was now necessarily to experience another perilous delay, if not to be wholly destroyed. He felt the indecency of hurrying away the children from the remains of their late father, while they were yet at the abbey. For some days past also, Mrs. Fitzorton had been indisposed, Johanna and Jane Atwood were, of course, confined by their attendance at the castle, and now, again, the situation in which Jane herself was brought home, alike prevented either from the accustomed division of their cares at the abbey.

All this delay, however, increased the alarm, and confirmed the heart-consuming image that had haunted, and which now returned to the bleeding memory of Caroline; and her pious tears fell in mingled streams,
for

for the death of her father, and the murder of Henry; and her equal prayers were offered up for the souls of both. "May the long repentance of one," exclaimed she, "fit his altered spirit for the blessed society of the other! and may it be forgotten in the friendship of heaven, there had been any cause for enmity on earth!"

But whatever be the stretch of our minds, our frames can endure but to a certain point; what that point is, can scarcely be known to ourselves, till by many a trial sustained *beyond* what it was imagined we could bear, we feel that neither mind nor body can support more. The unfortunate Caroline had now gained that point, and she fell into a state at once blessed and afflictive from its insensibility. The intervals of sense were so transient, that no soothing idea could be received or safely communicated touching the great objects of her momentary thought. She rambled in wild abruptness from one point of calamity to another; connected and confused her ideas; separated and mixed circumstances, almost in the same instant! She combined the differ-

ent destinies of Henry and sir Guise, then stretched out her arms to preserve her brother. She saw, in the troubled region of her fancy, all the forms of death, and beheld the visionary coffins and graves of them all! But this forlorn situation yielded, and was succeeded by a less troublous condition; and the ever-active Burton applied with happy effect those oblivious lenitives which alleviate nature in her extremity.

In the mean time the lieutenant, accompanied by his friends, paid the last offices to his unhappy father; the colonel assisted, and Olivia, from whom the knowledge of Caroline's illness could not be altogether concealed, and who understood she was not able to assist at the funeral, could not be restrained from attending her at the abbey, while the ceremony was performing at the chapel house. Indeed, she had long complained of the interdictions which the colonel had laid on her. She even thought them unkind, and it was almost in direct disobedience to his counsels, which she had usually thought oracular, that she persisted in her design to make

make her suffering friend a visit of condolence. "Shall I continue to absent myself at such a time as this?" she argued! "If my proffered love for her had ever a motive to shew itself, it is now, my dear brother! and what has been my motive of forbearance, hour after hour, day after day? a slight indisposition, in which I have suffered more from sympathy restrained, than any other cause. Vain and unfeeling apology! and now too, when she will stand more in need of the supports of friendship, than at any period perhaps of her life."

In truth, John had not a good plea left, which he could discover, and was therefore condemned to add the visit of Olivia to Caroline, to the other innumerable cares and perplexities of the time. No sooner, therefore, had John, Jane Atwood, and True George, departed for the chapel, than Olivia and Johanna, conducted by a servant, repaired to the abbey. To prevent the tumult of public curiosity and clamour, as well as to conceal the transaction, as much as possible, from Caroline, the body of sir Guise Stuart

was conveyed to the place of sepulture, through the passage under ground. For, although every kind of rumour had gone forth, the one, from its inconsistency, destructive of the other; and although in the absence of Henry, or rather since his discovery of the mysteries, there no longer subsisted any reason for the concealment of the transactions at the abbey, yet the lieutenant thought it best, for his sister's sake, to have every thing carried on in the most private manner. And thus Olivia and her friend Johanna avoided the sight of the burial preparations, but encountered nevertheless an unusual number of the villagers, whom vague reports and half-explained whispers of the thickening mysteries of the haunted abbey, and the rumoured death of the pretended quaker, had distributed up and down the different walks, applying to one another with a fearful kind of eagerness for information.

Olivia however attributed all this to the single event of sir Guise's death, not supposing but that the mystic assumption either of names or persons had been removed, or at least left unguarded.

unguarded, for some time before the baronet's death. The wandering, and indeed wondering groupes, therefore, were little noticed, and she entered the abbey by the grand avenue.

They found Caroline asleep;—according to the sacred phrase, she was sleeping from sorrow: the daughters of the apothecary, and both the female servants, attended her. Olivia and Johanna placed themselves on each side of the bed, and the attendants were just beginning a whispered account of their lady's alarming situation when she started in her slumber and awoke. To break the surprise of their too sudden appearance, Johanna and Olivia shaded themselves a moment behind the curtains: but a little rustling occasioned by this, induced Caroline to throw back the obstructions, and she discovered her visitors. It would scarce have been possible to give any two persons a more afflicting appearance than these good and gentle beings now wore to the terrified eye of Caroline Stuart. From motives of genuine respect and good will, Olivia had put on a mourning dress the instant she heard of the baronet's

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decease,

decease, and had worn it ever since; and from a motive yet more powerful—an attachment to the lieutenant's family—Johanna had, also, assumed the deepest sables. The unhappy Caroline looked on this as so unequivocal a confirmation of Henry's being dead, that she sprung up in her bed, and clasping her hands, implored Olivia to forgive the deed. "What deed, my sweet friend, oh! console yourself I beseech you. Your Johanna and I are come to intreat, that when you find yourself able you would pass a little time with us at the castle." "Ye are spirits of pity then," sighed Caroline, "who are permitted to come in that solemn form to shew us mercy; but, alas! the castle!" "No!" whispered she to Olivia, "that is not the place for us; the widowed dove had best come to the abbey; there she shall find succour; these poor arms shall be her refuge—fly—fly thou bereaved bird—haste—haste to thy nest. Yes, yes,—now, now, thou art safe."

With wild yet tender eagerness she clung to Mrs. Fitzorton as she spoke, and folded her passionately yet fearfully in her arms,

"Yet,

"Yet, no," continued she quitting, and abruptly receding from Olivia: "the abbey too is rifled, my poor, poor, father! he too is gone; nothing left here but sorrow: but there is a place still where we shall find both the truants, and all of us be happy—yonder, yonder, yonder."

She drew Mrs. Fitzorton again towards her with one hand, and with the other pointed to heaven. At once incongruous, and consistent, she proceeded in this manner for some time, then sunk on the pillow. "Alas!" said Olivia, "her senses are unsettled, my Johanna; the loss of her father, at such a period, when she might have hoped so much happiness from his life reformed. "That, my lady," interposed the apothecary's daughter, Sally, who was still with her, "is one cause of her present unhappiness; but there is another: she has taken into her imagination the strangest fancy—" "Hark! Sally," exclaimed the other daughter, "did you not hear a great noise?"

Olivia and Johanna were trying to recover, or rather watching the recovery of Caroline,

who had fallen into a swoon, and they seemed to have no ear or eye for any other object.

"No, Sally, I heard nothing," answered the other daughter. "There, again!" cried Sally.

"Yes, I heard it then." "Good God! what a shriek!" said one of the female attendants. "Is there any body below?" questioned Johanna, then first hearing the noise.

"Only my fellow-servant, who is gone down to the old cook for candles: we should have fetched them before but that the moon shone so bright, and my lady always bids us let some of the moon-light come into her chamber, especially since she has been ill; though I always think it is not good for any body, as the moon is but a melancholy companion unless a person is very happy; and then it's worth all the lights." "Hush, I surely heard a foot-step," said Johanna. "O it is nothing but the dog, miss, little old Fitz; see there is his shadow on the wall, he is coming round to his carpet." "All is still now," said the remaining attendant; "I will venture

venture to go down. But if one of the strange sights and sounds should be going about"—stepping back. "What can that be at one of the windows? this which is left open nearest the bed," asked Johanna with some emotion.

Every one but Olivia observed the object. It was palpably that of a figure looking into the room, from the other side of the window—a human face was visibly pressing the glass—and after examining the objects in the chamber, for some time, part of another figure was seen at the farther end of the same window—the only one not shut to—and then every ray of light from the moon was in a moment extinguished. "Heaven!" exclaimed Olivia, turning from Caroline, "What, my dear Johanna, can thus darken the room all of a sudden? I can no longer see a feature of Caroline's face, and, methought, her colour was just returning." The whole company were too much terrified to reply.

"The servant is now coming with a candle," said Johanna, "all will be well—do
I not

not seem alarmed—we shall disturb Caroline.”

The door of the ante-chamber was left half open, and a light, from the opposite side, gleamed from it; but the light did not advance, and the door being suddenly drawn to, almost shut out of the chamber the faint sparks which had appeared. A whispering of different voices ensued—the voices stopped—the door of the ante-chamber again half opened, and a figure, folded up in a tattered dress, came gliding into the room, with a light that flung a ghastly hue on the countenance of the person who bore it, and on the surrounding objects, as from a candle burning in the socket. With stealing steps the figure paced round the chamber, examining in its way every part of the furniture—then walked to the head of the bed, holding up the flaring light to every countenance—it then went back with like care, but with more precipitation; and had scarce regained the ante-chamber before the light went out. Olivia, with great strength of mind, had enjoined the attendants to silence on the first appearance of alarm; observing, that the
life

life as well as the reason of Caroline depended on it; and partly from love—partly from fear—they had hitherto obeyed.

In the midst of this total darkness, more distinct sounds, and particularly what follows, assailed their ears:—"Now, now—or never. Our principal mark is in bed fast asleep."

This changed the terrors which had before been excited on the old notion of the abbey being haunted by evil spirits, into a no less dread of its being infested by robbers. The words which, after a short pause succeeded, appeared to put this opinion beyond a doubt: "The window which was open is covered, and all are secured below—I tell you the rest are gone to the chapel. We have brought round two of the horses into the forest within a few steps of the lane that goes round to the road. We can wrap the woman in the blankets, and then the way is all clear before us. What a plague are you afraid of then? Here are the other gags. If you dally any longer, I will call up some of the others." A dreadful silence remained. In the next instant it was broken by a sudden uproar

uproar of confused sounds from below, accompanied by a cry of "Seize, seize the ruffians—secure them for justice—but shed no blood." A number of steps were then heard upon the stairs, and a murmur of voices was resumed in the ante-chamber. Presently rushed two persons from thence into the bed-room, crying to each other "The window—the window—no way but the window—your cursed delay has ruined all."

Instantly the casement was forced open, the cloth which had been spread over it torn away, and the moon-beams which thence fell on the chamber, discovered the ragged figure they had before seen, with his companion in like shabby habiliments, desperately attempting to throw themselves out. One succeeded. Three other persons coming into the room, one of them ran to the window, and telling the second fugitive that death would be the consequence of the least noise, while in that apartment, he was conducted back into the ante-chamber. The other two who had entered, went towards the bed, on or near which
every

every one had remained, in almost breathless consternation. "Fear nothing," whispered one of the persons, in accents well calculated to inspire courage, though there was now so violent a tumult of voices from below stairs, the soothing sounds were scarcely audible. The person, however, who had led off the second culprit, now coming up softly with a light, discovered, to the astonishment of every one present, the faces of Partington and Henry Fitzorton, in those who had advanced to the bed, and that of Floresco in the bearer of the light. So suddenly, unexpectedly, momentous, however, and under such peculiar circumstances, did these make their appearance, that it seemed but a continuation of the former mysteries—a completion, indeed, of the magic by the entrance of some benign Genii, on the departure of evil spirits. Every thing above stairs, and below, still precluded explanation. Joy, sorrow, hope, fear, characterized the moment, and distinguished it by all these blended passions, from every other in the lives of either of the parties then in the chamber.

Henry

Henry and his friends, guided surely by Providence, came, like guardian angels, to save the wife who was folding him in her arms—the mother of his children—the betrothed bride of his bosom friend—and Caroline Stuart!—from the horrid machinations of midnight ruffians—the noble-minded, yet humble orphan of a burning soil—one of the beings whom christian masters consider as the beasts of the field—as an article of slavery and of sale, was appointed to become an active instrument in this preservation by the power, who in a yet more glorious instance, even the redemption of the world, clothed the redeemer with humility.

But to Caroline Stuart, how shall even this immediate interposition of heaven be extended!

Neither the tumultuous scenes from below, nor the fearful sounds or sights in her own apartment, had reached her ear or unfolded her eye; nor had she, indeed, moved since she fell into sudden sleep. “Alas! it is the sleep of the grave,” sighed Olivia, to whom even her husband was now, from the first moment of her heart’s election, the only second object

object of her attention. Every thought and every emotion went to Caroline. "O God! God! she is dead—she is dead!" ejaculated Henry: his accents at once frantic and impassioned, although demanded by the occasion, terrified all present. "Ah! no," exclaimed Johanna, "blessed be God, not dead, I felt her breath, this instant, on my lips." "O heavens! I hear it too," said Olivia, "hush—hush, my love—do as I have done Henry—thus—softly—and you may hear it too." Olivia guided the ear of Henry, till it pressed on Caroline's lips, and after the silence of a moment, in which breath seemed to have forsaken the listening band, "No! no!" groaned Henry, "I hear it not; never shall those lips be animated more!" "But an instant ago there was life on them," said Johanna: "And so there is now—again—again I felt it on mine," cried Olivia. She importuned her husband to be convinced, and assisting him to place his face towards that of Caroline, in the manner she had done her own, he sensibly felt the irregular, but palpable breathing of her he mourned,

mourned, on his cheek; and while he yet remained in that position, the breath gained a little accession of strength; and, before he changed his posture, had acquired the force of a sigh. "Yes, there can be no doubt of it, she is alive!" cried Henry, enraptured; withdrawing from the bed and falling on his knees, in gratitude to heaven. Little Floresco followed his example, repeating "Him is alive! him is alive! Negro boy was praying God to take him his own poor self, and put him in grave, and bring back good spirit of good lady, to make all good peoples happy—but him is alive."

In the highest fervor of these extacies of our sable son of nature, indeed on the first mention of life remaining in Caroline, Partington had hurried down stairs, but now returned with Burton, John Fitzorton, the lieutenant, father Arthur, and several others whom he met, in his headlong course for assistance, coming from the chapel.

A new scene of wonders now opened on the eyes of all the last comers, except Partington, who encountering his friends near the gates of the

the castle, and surrounded by half the villagers of both parishes, all in much disorder, spoke only to the apothecary on the one, then most alarming, subject, Miss Stuart's illness; so that to many of them, the colonel in particular, Partington himself, even before they reached the abbey, was an object of amazement; yet on that object which in a manner annihilated the rest—on Caroline Stuart—every other surprize and every other care, while Olivia related the story of the events since her arrival with Johanná, which she detailed with afflictive accuracy, became subordinate.

The apothecary at the end of the narrative questioned his eldest daughter, whether she had attended to his orders in giving the draughts regularly, both as to times and proportions? She assured him she had administered them every two hours, not only before he went to the funeral, but for the whole of the preceding day; that none of them produced the composure either of mind or body her father had expected as their result;—for that his patient had not closed her eyes

eyes till after every power of speech and of motion was taken from her, by the violent exertions of both, and that the last draught having been offered and accepted about a quarter of an hour before she fell asleep, she had apprehended in her own mind, that it had proved too strong for her weakened faculties; “but I dare not disclose my fears to any one, my dear father,” said she, “because, I am sure, let what will come of it, you meant it to do her good.”

“No harm can come of it,—and in the end it will do her good, child,” answered the apothecary, firmly.—“Its strength has produced on her weakness, it is true, the alarming effects you have noticed, and in a degree far beyond my expectation, owing to the unsettled state of her mind and senses, and the sight of persons and things, which, in that state, every object aggravates; the medicine was intended to act as anodyne, and I had judged a small addition to its opiate quality proper to be infused on this day, lest any account of, or reflection upon, the solemn duties assigned to this evening, should

should gain access to her too feeling heart; she is already in a resuscitating state, though, perhaps, to you imperceptible:—but the giving her freer air, and, indeed, wholly withdrawing yourselves, will be very proper.”

Every body retired from the bed, and felt the force of the remark: yet no one seemed willing to be the first to quit the chamber. They, however, receded towards the door. The apothecary threw back the curtains, and opened one of the windows which had been closed. “I knew,” said he, “the force of the medicine was almost spent; and that the functions of nature were regaining their tone:—See—that faint tinting in the cheek, is a good symptom.—It might be called by Mr. Henry, the rose-bud of promised return to wholesome life:—look,—and that soft dew that you see on the temples, and which will presently overspread the beautiful forehead, shall nourish it.”—“O! and those sweet eyes, which, praised be the almighty, are opening their gentle beams upon us,” said Mrs. Fitzorton,

ton, "shall be as the blessed Sun to re-
animate her heart and to cheer ours!"
Henry raised his wife's hand, even to his
lips, but insensibly stepped nearer to the
bed, that he might see what she had de-
scribed. Indeed, every person in the room,
on the apothecary's first remark, had ad-
vanced.

The progress of recovery from a partial
trance, indeed, by means like these, is not
slow: and the effect of a successful anodyne
is known frequently to produce not only
unbroken repose in sleep, but to bestow
on the harassed body and mind, even in
the awaking moments, images and ideas,
the very reverse of those irritable and pain-
ful phantoms, which made the application
necessary. Sounds and visions of a lulling,
and almost celestial kind, follow or accom-
pany the first movements after the spell,
that for a time locked up every mortal
power, is unbound; and the charm acquires
fresh beauty from our consciousness, when
sensibility is in a degree restored. We
seem as it were new born, and an inhabi-
tant

tant of a more delightful world, with kind oblivions of whatever was unfortunate; and sweet recollections of whatever has been happy in the past. Such appeared to have been the temporary trance, and the sensations which succeeded it in the mind of Caroline. She saw before her eye the forms of all who were most dear to her on earth: but they floated as yet before her intellectual vision as heavenly shapes, as spirits blessed even to the degree she could wish them blessed. She saw Henry and Olivia side by side, and smiled tenderly upon both. She gazed earnestly at the former, bent forwards as if to gain a juster point of view, passed the back of her hand over her own eyes, as if doubtful of their sight: and then, but with timid advances, extended her arm towards Henry, and, at length, touching his shoulder, she drew back as if astonished to find him embodied; trembling a moment, she again put forth her arm, and reaching the hand of Henry, gave it to Olivia. "There, dearest brother," said she, with a faint but satisfied tone, "thank heaven!"—

Such of the company as knew not the circumstance of her fatal misconception of the lieutenant's words, in which number were Olivia and Henry, looked upon this as the remains of her delirium; and those who were in the secret of its import, did not judge the present by any means the proper moment to unfold particulars. John and Burton having conferred a moment, the latter renewed his request that the society would separate. "I will agree to this," said Olivia, "if I can obtain dear Caroline's promise."—"No promises, sister," cried the colonel, "can be asked or granted at present! two importunate messages have already been brought up by the impatient Partington, who had again occasion to leave us for another party." John now assisted the apothecary and the lieutenant, gently to enforce obedience: and though as Caroline's fuller sense returned, and objects and circumstances assumed more and more their real size and position, she was nearer rationality, and in her peculiar case, alas! farther from felicity—the dire paroxysms were

were at an end, and expanding her wide-spread arms in token of unspeakable gratitude for the mass of heart-felt attentions bestowed on her, she saw all her friends, except the apothecary and his daughters, quit the room without seeming to press at that moment their longer stay. Her eyes, however, insensibly settled on Henry and Olivia till they could be no more seen. But scarcely were this amiable pair out of sight, even while the apothecary had required an audience with his daughters in the ante-chamber, than the female attendant who remained with Caroline, perhaps with imprudent, though well-meant zeal, took occasion to inform her, in a loose and desultory way, of the peril they had all been in, even of their lives; and that in Henry Fitzorton, Caroline and all her friends had found a deliverer. To this officious information Caroline made no answer in words, but she looked the language which no words have ever yet conveyed to the ears of mortal man, in the utmost felicity of eloquence.

It is from a consciousness of the inadequacy of words, indeed, to describe emotions of a particular kind, that we have forbore to attempt delineating the feelings of Henry in the above scene: should there be any readers, we assure ourselves there can be very few, who imagine that those feelings were derogatory to the character of a husband, a father, or a friend, even in that hour of trial, will neither do him justice, nor reflect honour on their own hearts.

CHAPTER XLIX.

BUT surprises of a very different nature have been waiting our leisure below stairs: and which must needs have excited some degree of curiosity in the reader's mind, now it can be drawn from more interesting objects. The woods of Fitzorton, and the abbey forest, had been, time immemorial, the summer resort of a tribe of the Egyptian wanderers; and although Sir Armine did not absolutely encourage those who attached themselves to the environs of the castle, he suf-
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ferred them to erect their local habitations in the neighbourhood of his mansion ; would indirectly contribute a faggot to their fire, and a joint of meat to their pot, to repress, and, if possible, reform their pilfering habits : Olivia and Henry were more avowedly their patrons—the one would not seldom make up a little bundle of comfortables for their hedge-born children, and sometimes allow them to inspect her lovely hands to read the lines of life ; while the former would also, in his early days, consult them on the subject of his more difficult destiny, and amongst other romantic plans had once serious thoughts of joining the train as well to favour his love, as to escape that interruption to which his rambles around the abbey domain so often exposed him. But True George was the chief protector of the fable band which established themselves in the Fitzorton district ; for there were two parties, the one calling themselves the castle, and the other the abbey gypsies : and what is not a little curious, they were as much in hostility with one another as the two houses to which they considered them-

selves as appropriate. Had Henry put his project of the moment in execution, he would have certainly attached himself to the tribe of the abbey, not only from its proximity to the sacred chamber of the inalienable subduer of his heart, but because the hostile parties in all their treaties of peace, or suspensions of arms, prescribed a line of demarcation which the castle gypsies could not pass without an immediate renewal of war; yet Henry had been always on good terms with both parties, and so of course had True George. The servants of both houses would alternately resort to the different tribes to have their fortunes told; although they seemed in general to give their own oracles the preference. Since Sir Armine's death, however, the castle prophets, though patronized for a time by Olivia, were routed by John Fitz-orton, and even Henry yielded to his motive. "Depend upon it, my dear brother," said he, "some of these days these yellow *protéges* of yours will be divulging more than is agreeable: and although we affect incredulity, when an idea which self-love, or a faithful heart

heart declares impossible, is poured into our ears, it is the corner stone sometimes of a fatal edifice, which jealousy can find materials to complete even to the destruction of the peace of innocence—I am determined to rid the country of them, at least our party, and have no objection to being called cruel on the business.” When Henry and Olivia were abroad, John kept his word in the very next summer, but passed them over to Partington, and not without a *douceur* to reconcile them to the change: and they soon thought themselves gainers by the transfer, for the merry humours of the squire were much relished: his civility to the worthless, and his abuse of the worthy was soon understood, and his bounty being ever proportioned to desert in every station of life, he bowed and abused them into something like principles, at least rendered them a less criminal race of people, and many of them were not only pensioners on his poor-rascal-warehouse, but he would sometimes buy up the half-worn dresses of his poor, but good neighbours during the winter, or exchange them for new articles of

the same kind, on purpose to lay in a stock for his gypsey vagabonds against their summer return to the Bury woodlands, by the sides or in which, he had erected an occasional hut to mark any discovery he had made of a worthy trait of heart or character in any of these wanderers; the nature of the action was written over the door of the building, and a key presented to the party for whose use it was intended, by way of encouragement. It must at the same time be confessed, that to stand as a monument of any detected baseness, he would order his carpenter to run up here and there a gallows, nearest to the place where the foul deed was committed, and if the offending party had the hardiness to return, or was allowed another trial, a rope was thrust into her or his hand, with a label worked into the noose, holding out the threatening word—Beware!

With these Henry Fitzorton, on his second forced march to Partington's, renewed his acquaintance. They had just then resumed their leafy retreats for the season. On the evening of his arrival at the Bury, the leader
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of them, with impatient earnestness, solicited the honour of an audience: this being granted, Henry went up into what was always called by the master of the mansion, poet's dormitory;—sacred to the lawyer and philosopher of the Fitzorton family there were other apartments—when the subsequent conversation past betwixt Henry and the person who followed him up stairs.

“I am now one of the fathers and chiefs of the tribe, an please your honour, who for so many years enjoyed the protection of good Sir Armine, and his family: I lived in, and beside Fitzorton woods and hedge-rows the best part of my long life, and have been the better for it ever since: your honour, and madam Olivia, and squire Clare, all used to pay me and mine a visit, and I love Sir John that now is,—though he sent us away from our old household trees, as his good father used to call them.”

“I remember you, my honest fellow,” said Henry—“I remember you came from the abbey-party to our's, because”——

“Because,” interrupted the gypsie, “I

could not bear to be sheltered by the leaves, or fed by the stolen offals of Sir Guise Stuart, after the good father Arthur had put us in the right way—and after I saw and heard what the wicked baronet was doing against his lady and children. And our patron, the squire, of late years can hardly find words bad enough to throw at me when he is loading me with good things.”

“ And what have you at the end of this preface to impart ?” asked Henry.

“ I have to beseech your honour to read what is contained in these papers immediately,” answered the gypsy, “ and to take such steps as you may judge proper thereupon ; I was just going to send to our squire for a pass to Fitzorton castle, to deliver them to you or Sir John, when I heard you were come back to the Bury. Here they are, sir. I have nothing to say more, but to desire you will beware of gypsies, but not to think ill of Blondel Gapper, your humble servant, though he is one of them.”

Gapper, of whose fidelity True George had often made fair report, and of whose
kindness

kindness Henry himself had received testimony, now took his leave, and Henry sat down to the perusal of the mysterious papers. They were of a nature to call out his utmost astonishment and apprehension. He judged it expedient to make Partington a partaker of the confidence, but it was with very great difficulty he could be prevented from returning home before the squire had discovered the cause of his impatience: the instant, however, it was discovered, he concurred not only in thinking the impatience warranted, but contributed all his own impetuous powers could supply to give it new force. "We must be off again directly," said Partington to Mrs. Herbert—"I must leave these young villains"—meaning Carry and little John, "in your care, Mrs. Worthless, until we come to you again, or send for you to Fitzorton."

Vehement as were the agitations of Henry, they were less violent than those of Partington on this occasion: though both were so busied, hand, foot, and voice—now in the mansion, now in the stable, now in the

out-houses, driving every servant before them, and assisting to collect every weapon of attack and defence upon the premises, from the fire-arms in the life-and-death-room, as the squire had baptised it, to the spades and mattocks in the garden-house, and crowding them all in Henry's own coach, which still remained, and into all the carriages of the Bury, that a spectator not in their secret would either have deemed them both seized with sudden madness, or that they were arming to defend an invaded country. Even the servants, albeit in the practice of flying at the word of command, and inured to extraordinary expeditions, had never seen their squire in such a fury of preparation before. One of them was dispatched to the gypsie chief, to attend at the Bury that moment with the witness he mentioned; and when they appeared to the summons, Partington abused them as if they were two of the plagues of Egypt, kissed their discoloured hands with more devotion than he would have done those of Cleopatra, the queen of
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their country, and gave Blondel the command of one of the armed chariots, ordered him to shut up the person who was one of his tribe in the same vehicle, and then follow the lead. Mrs. Herbert alone was made, in part, confidential; and her conduct thereupon so gratified the squire, that he regretted the young knaves, Henry's children, must have a she-thing to superintend them, since he was sure, from the manner in which that hussy, mother Herbert, had put a blunderbuss, and one of the broad-swords into the carriage, she would slice off an honest gentleman's head as neatly as any of those old tygresses, Boadicea, Zenobia, or Joan of Arc.

In this manner did they return to Fitz-orton, taking up the turnpike-man by the way. They found the castle almost emptied of its inhabitants. One of the few servants, however, who remained at home, told them the family were gone to the burial of Sir Guise Stuart; they therefore continued their route directly to the abbey, for whose late possessor the chapel bell struck on
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their ear as they were passing, but their eyes were yet more forcibly impressed by a sight of those villagers whom Olivia and Johanna had seen scattered about, but who had dispersed until recalled in greater multitudes by the few who dared to penetrate so far as the chapel, into which they protested they had seen enter a coffin, which several present had assured them, contained the dead body of Sir Guise Stuart, and that they moreover beheld his son, the lieutenant, and Sir John Fitzorton, True George, and many others whom they knew, walking, all alive, as mourners behind, and good father Arthur, the popish priest, before it, with a book in one hand, and a light in the other.

This relation, which was regarded as at the top of all the miraculous things that had over-shadowed the abbey, the forest, and the whole parish, re-assembled them; until encouraged by each other, they resolved to see whether the whole was visionary or real: for although the majority determined in favour of the popular superstition, the credit
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given to some of those who made their reports from the chapel-house, amongst whom was the landlord of the Fitzorton arms, who received his intelligence from the young sexton, no inconsiderable number were of opinion they had all along been deluded by their fears, as to the objects they had themselves seen, or thought they saw. A large body of the rustics, therefore, were spirited up by the power of numbers, though one amongst them, with some tremor, remarked, that a single ghost would put to the route a whole army, though it were but the ghost of a sucking child; and they took courage to move even to the abbey door, which they reached in the very moment that a violent shriek, which was followed by cries of murder, were heard by the party within. The blood of those who were gathered together without, curdled at the sound: yet terrifying as it was, the shriek was too palpably human, and female, for any that wore the forms of men to fly from: their apprehensions for themselves were absorbed in that great principle of nature, which at once distinguishes

tinguishes and protects humanity: instead of receding they pushed onward, and finding the inner doors fastened, they were in the act of bursting them open, when Partington and his cavalcade, with Henry Fitzorton, arrived.

“Assist, assist us, my friends!” exclaimed Henry, with a voice almost of madness,—
“Assist us in the prevention of dreadful horrors—of inhuman murders! now, even now, committing within that house!” In a moment the furious attack was made by the multitude, led on by Henry and Partington, and the abbey was filled with the defenders of innocence! A gang of infamous ruffians were thus, in an instant, detected and secured. It was, at once, the crisis both of danger and of delivery. To reach that crisis, had been the wily labour of conspiring villany for many months; but to render the conspiracy abortive, and involve the conspirators, even in their own snare, was the achievement only of a few minutes. Such is the toil by which human machinations are conducted, and such the facility with which
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the hand of Providence reveals and overthrows them.

As Henry led his wife and Johanna down stairs, Partington was discovered at the head of his myrmidons, standing over their bound captives; but the conquerors were so numerous, that nothing could be seen but themselves. At the sight, however, of the rescued Olivia, and her friends, the victors sent forth an universal shout of triumph. This gave John an opportunity to thank them for their zeal, but to observe, at the same time, that much of its good effect would be counteracted if they suffered even their exultation at present to disturb Miss Caroline Stuart, whom they had helped to defend, intimating, that she was under many alarms already, and not in a state to hear them accounted for. The very name of Caroline Stuart, combined with ill health, but yet soothing them into the certainty of her being alive and once more at the abbey—that Caroline, whom they had so often found a mediator, and a friend, to the utmost extent of her humble power—
silenced

silenced them like the operation of some sudden charm, and they uttered their honest wishes and thanksgivings only in whispers. Henry had, in the meanwhile, on a hint from the colonel, placed Olivia and Johanna in his own coach, which had so recently arrived from the Bury, observing to his wife, that Partington and John would take care of the banditti whom they had happily discovered, and "it is no time for you, my love," said he, ordering the coachman to drive home,— "to hear the particulars of a nest of ruffians."—"Nor do I wish it," answered she; "a thousand thanks for hurrying us away from their sight," answered Olivia; "no doubt, my Henry, but they will turn out very wicked people, since they seemed to watch a time when they might securely terrify, and, perhaps, plunder a set of defenceless women; and when they knew their defenders were, in general, engaged in the most holy offices. But, O! how providential your return, my dearest Henry! What an interposition!" "How was it brought about?"

about?" requested Johanna. "And where is my Mrs. Herbert?" "and our children?" demanded Olivia.

Henry, whom a forced marriage—in spite of the value of the object—an enthralled situation before, had involved in eternal reservations, managements, and difficulties, was puzzling and hacking at a reply, when Olivia, misconceiving the cause of his hesitation, exclaimed—"Good heaven! surely the alarm did not extend to Mr. Partington's! I hope all is quiet and well at the Bury."—"Perhaps the dear children and Mrs. Herbert were your fellow-travellers?" said Johanna. "Perhaps they were set down at the castle?"

Henry now found it became necessary to say something; and yet finding it both impolitic and improper to speak to the whole of the machinations which were the subject of the dreadful papers delivered to him by the gypsey chief, he affectionately soothed the fears of his wife, by an assurance that both their children were well and happy—that Partington had deputed Mrs. Herbert and
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little Caroline to be his housekeepers, and little John the representative of the squire himself, till he should return to the Bury; and that in short, having very suddenly received intelligence of a foul conspiracy formed by a party of gypsies, who had annoyed the neighbourhood of the castle and of the abbey for some time, and were carrying their depredations to the most daring lengths as she must have heard; it appeared necessary to Partington, as well as to himself, to set out with the utmost expedition to prevent, if possible, the complete mischief.

After numberless thanks for her husband's goodness, and many apologies for her own impatience;—"I know not how it is," said Mrs. Fitzorton to Johanna;—"but I find it impossible to be happy, or even as contented as I ought, when my husband or either of my children are absent; and, I fear, I am unreasonable enough to wish, that whether they were in prosperity or in perils I might always have them in my view, or easily within my reach, even till death should shut them from my
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mental fight." She almost whispered this to Johanna, but Henry heard—"And henceforward," said he, forcibly, "that wish shall be gratified! I here pledge myself before this fair witness, that when our children return to us, nothing but that dreadful summons—which heaven keep many smiling years from my Olivia!—shall again divide us from the society of each other; nor will I henceforth accept a visit, or take an excursion of any kind, from which Olivia shall be excluded."—"Could I have believed," answered Olivia, "that one of the most terrifying nights, and which threatened to be even fatal, should prove one of the most blessed of my happy life!"

Her full heart could not utter more: the rest was the expressive silence of felicity.

Nor had Henry in his expression gone farther than the truth. He now wished beyond every other good to continue the awful duties of husband and of father; and that those might be unbroken, he thought that her guardian eye, and protecting presence, would even counteract whatever future events might

might happen. Hence he embraced Olivia's idea of a family union, which might keep them all together, even on the night that he had seen the only object in the whole world which could render the plan difficult to be realized — an object which he had seen in a situation every way more affecting than at any former period of a long and eventful intercourse. That situation had, however, lost none of its interest, but he concealed the emotions which he could not conquer: he even struggled with them enough to amuse Olivia and Johanna the rest of their way to the castle, with an account of Partington's loading every thing and every body with fire and sword for the expedition.

Perhaps, under the veil of night some tears were shed, and the roll of the coach might sink the sound of some heart-sick sighs, which mixed with, or followed the narration: but, surely, it is not consistent with the justice or the compassion either of earth or of heaven to rebuke him for these.

CHAPTER L.

JOHN Fitzorton, Partington, father Arthur, the lieutenant, True George, and Floresco, were all this while busily employed in the abbey. The first, in his magistratical capacity, exhorted the still clustering but now only murmuring multitude, to assist in conveying the culprits, whom Partington had caused to be manacled hand and foot, to some place at a greater distance from the apartments of the sick Caroline. True George seconded this motion; but, as an amendment, proposed they should be carried to a snug place he knew of in the out-buildings, which Dennison had formerly told him was the abbey dungeon.—“ I know it well,” said Arthur. “ It will only be necessary,” rejoined John, “ to put them there for the night, as other measures must be taken with them in the morning: away with them therefore.”

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The word of command found such ready obedience, that had the captives been pigs of lead, they would have been moved off like so many pounds of feathers. Indeed, Partington himself, his own friends, and the Bury gypsey, seemed to feel the force, and do the work of angry elephants. The criminals were lifted over the impediments which ruinous time had thrown in their way, the massy stones, fallen statues, and half-perfect towers—until they reached the spot recommended by True George, who bore one of the ringleaders on his shoulders. It was, indeed, a place of dreadful security, and fit only for criminals of the most heinous kind. It stood in the extreme angle of that part of the uninhabited buildings, near which the unfortunate Sir Guise took refuge from the presumed violence of his son: no door covered the abhorrent mouth that gaped for the reception of its prey: it was scooped in the form of a well, into which there was no way of ascent or descent but by means of a ladder, which not even a climbing animal could hope to ascend, so absolute was the perpendicular,

perpendicular, and had little hold for the feet—So had it been represented by True George, who had, however, the curiosity and enterprize to explore it with a candle and lantern when a boy. The lieutenant, nevertheless, said, and in which he was joined by both Jerom, and Jonathan, he had seen on one of the nights of his own watch, the figure of a man come out of that place, and had even pursued him; but another person coming up from the cave, close upon him, extinguished the light, and effected an escape.” “I am glad of it,” said Partington, “as the gentry know this way the better if they have been there before; so what say you to our throwing the worthy personages in just as they are—they are exactly trussed for the occasion—and you see there is no ladder now at hand?”

The mob were delighted with this proposal, and would have assisted its execution, without consideration of consequences, had not John Fitzorton and Arthur represented the danger, and the impropriety of such a proceeding; Partington, however, had taken

out the gag from the mouth of the person he himself was helping to carry, "to know whether he wished to be complimented with the first toss?" making his usual bow as he asked the question. The answer, however, to which was, "that he had rather be thrown into hell-fire than go again into that place." "Again! what you have been in it before, have you then?" said Partington.

It is impossible to express the mute horror that sat, indeed, on the countenances of most of the other culprits as they approached the abyss. "O, any where but there, under or above ground—you know not its terrors," said the wretch, whose tongue was untied. "Nay, then, there are good reasons which we are still unacquainted with," said Partington, "why this, of all others, should be the place: in—in—in—with them, my friends." At this instant Jonathan and Jerom came running with a ladder which they had gone unbidden to fetch, and in despite of struggles, supplications, &c. &c. the overpowering multitude were forced down; True George asserted on his own knowledge, there was
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but the way they went in to get out, and that he proposed to guard, sword in hand, until the morning. "And ickle Florrey shall guard too, and the first bad mens shall die that tries to come up till good mens give leave." This proposal was accepted: the whole gang, therefore, were compelled to descend one by one, or receive the stroke, which Partington swore should sever their amiable heads from their shoulders the moment they refused. Yet, after all, the matter was effected by every violent measure but the one threatened. Several of the village mob were earnest for leave to keep Floresco and True George company, especially the turnpike-man, but on the colonel making it a particular request, they would return home for the sake of Mrs. Fitzorton and miss Stuart, and not intermeddle with the affair until he had made farther enquiry, and he had entered into a private examination of the prisoners—they respectfully complied with his wishes. Soon after, the lieutenant with Burton and Arthur went back to the abbey, while John, Partington, the turnpike-man,

the gypsey chief and his associate repaired to the castle. But early next morning such additional discoveries were made, and of so complicated a nature, that John Fitzorton found it expedient to consult higher judicial powers than his own. All farther concealments were, therefore, of necessity, given up, and the whole gang of conspirators were fully committed to take their trial at the ensuing assizes. Accordingly they were moved under a proper guard to the county jail, and no other charge given to the friends of the abbey, and the castle, than to forbear speaking on the business in the hearing, either of Olivia or Caroline.

CHAPTER LI.

MEANTIME, the recovery of miss Stuart went favourably on, and by gentle accessions of bodily and mental strength she came to a resolution of no longer suffering herself to puzzle betwixt visionary and existing objects.

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Indistinct and impressive forms—those to which she had awaked, still moved before her mind's eye, and she at length demanded of her brother an unequivocal answer to a few short and simple questions. “My dearest Charles, you are not now to learn that my nature always suffers more from conjecture of evil than from the evil itself; or, rather, conjecture is the greatest evil I can feel. I perceive, and I am sure with the kindest motive, you have all hid from me the one thing needful for me to be informed of, yet I have not brought forward the enquiry myself till I felt, as now I do, the power of supporting its result, be it what it may. Tell me then, without more reserve, whether by any tremendous hazard, you have or have not lost your friend? is the noble Olivia a mourning widow—or a happy wife?”

“The latter, Oh! blessed be God! the latter,” answered Charles. He then entered into the explanations he had so long and ardently desired, and which had been so perpetually in check. Caroline fervently paid her acknowledgments to heaven, and chang-

ed the subject ; but the moment of receiving this soul-relieving intelligence, was, likewise, the moment of deciding on the line of conduct she should pursue. Her doubts were dispelled as to the only point she would allow herself to ask. The horrible idea of Henry Fitzorton's death, and by the hand of Charles Stuart, was removed. He lived !—his wife was happy !—without farther investigation as to the state of his affections—whether he still loved, or had forgot Caroline ;—what were his looks, or what his words—how great his firmness—or how little his fortitude—she knew there was but one course for her to take. The sickness of a father, had summoned her to the place she had long avoided ;—his death terminated every duty which attached to that spot. Henry was married—Olivia had bestowed her pity, love, and bounty on her parent, on her brother, and on herself. Following, therefore, the sacred impulse of an unaffectedly pure and just mind, which, when again restored to itself, combined past and present circumstances—without proudly or rashly straining itself to
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see what in heroic conflict it might be screwed to—an experiment which it is, at all times, rather vanity than virtue to attempt—without too much confidence, or too much suspicion of others, or of herself, she modestly resolved upon taking the paths which might lead her out of temptation—the paths which to gain, and to keep, forms the daily prayer of—alas ! daily-erring mortals.

Caroline had not a doubt but to her that peace would be more surely found in the track that led to the soft recess from which she had so lately been called ; and in a conference she held with the holy Arthur, the day following that she had with her brother ; she explained to him her intentions. She explained them in the sacred moment of her religious confession ; a duty she had postponed, till the faculties of her mind were so far recovered, as to perceive, clearly, every object of offence and of rectitude. The monk entered her chamber, and found her in preparation to receive him. In the heart of Caroline Stuart, religion

wore none of her trappings; pure and holy, and simple, it there resided as in its proper shrine. The tinkling bell—the illumined taper—the solemn pealing of the organ—the mystic murmurs of the priesthood—and the breath of the frankincense, had there no sanctuary. She rejected not the public ceremonies of her faith, but the perfumes of her incense ascended from an unsullied heart. That heart required the solace and the assistance of one whom she knew to be a sincere minister of God; and aided by him, her spirit thirsted to commune with God himself. Yet to the one what had she to confess, that might not be humbly offered to the other? Before HIM then, who is the prime source of every other power, she poured forth her soul in acknowledgment—for the blessings which, she felt assured, would crown the death of her father—for the preservation of her benefactor's life—for the recovery of his happiness, should it be yet incomplete—for the long and unclouded days of Olivia, and of her children—and lastly,

lastly, for heavenly aid in the future government of her own heart.

Animated, yet tranquillized, by these effusions, she delineated to Arthur her design and its motives; but she conceived her return to the asylum, of which John Fitzorton was the patron, made it matter of right his permission should be first obtained.

The monk saw into all her motives, implied or expressed, and imparted them to John, with reservation only of some ideas that he thought it no way material for the colonel to hear, but which were, in truth, similar to those that lay in the recesses of John's breast; yet, which in his opinion, as in that of the holy confessor, rather exalted than humbled the character of the confessed. Without dwelling on the subject, John assured father Arthur that he would undertake to give proper reasons at the castle, while the arrangements were making at the abbey. In truth, the whirl of circumstances had again brought back upon John, perilous subjects he had so incessantly laboured to keep at a distance, and he was not sorry to see one

occasion more present itself, that carried with it, at least, the aspect of preserving the peace of his family and of his friends.

Accordingly, John contrived for some days to represent the abbey as improper for Olivia's farther visits; and Burton continued to assure her that her favourite Caroline was daily more and more convalescent, by which means Arthur had the better opportunity to prepare for the journey, of which himself and his Indian were to be the companions.

These preparations, however, were not a little obstructed by persons of all descriptions flocking to the abbey, to make their heartfelt enquiries after the health of miss Stuart, and to pay their visit of respect to the lieutenant: those pensioners, in particular who had been bequeathed, by lady Matilda, to her daughter, many of whom were still alive, and the objects of Caroline's undiminished bounty, could not be restrained from telling their daily, almost hourly, tales of gratitude, to their benefactress; and amongst these garrulous stories, she found out, what but for them
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she never could have known,—that ever since her absence it had been the custom of Henry Fitzorton, to make the tour of the Abbey parish, on the first day of every new month,—in the manner lady Matilda and Caroline, he knew, had been accustomed to do,—whenever he was down at the castle; and that the apothecary represented him in his absence; and when any of the pensioners were ill, or unhappy, Henry would always bring them comfort, and come and sit by, and nurse, and talk to them, till they cried for joy.

In short, from the unfortunate, but necessary, moment of Caroline Stuart's first departure, Henry had considered her poor, as his poor, devolved upon his heart, by a kind of natural inheritance. And while his Olivia employed herself, in making happy her cottagers, he would take his rounds of benevolence, on the like principle, as the agent of Caroline: and for this to be discovered thus unexpectedly, by the very objects of the bounty, was at once delightful and distressing to Caroline. The reports of the

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death

death and penitence of Sir Guise, and the return of his son and daughter, flew, through the whole county, with the speed of thought; and the tributary marks of loving-kindness shewn to the survivors, by all ranks and sexes, and orders of religion, retarded the execution of Caroline's design: and thus was the abbey—which folly and vice had brought into disrepute, and desertion, and which had been shunned even by the rustic, whose half-thatched shed was exposed to all the winds of heaven—redeemed by the return of wisdom and virtue.

At length, however, a favourable moment occurred; and Caroline with her suite took her second leave of the abbey; and by the contrivance of colonel Fitzorton, they performed their journey in one of those carriages which Partington and Henry had loaded for her defence. But it had still been found necessary for Caroline to begin her fatigues, after others had begun their repose;—after Olivia, and, perhaps, Henry himself, were in the arms of sleep.—Yet, amidst the cloudings of an unquiet night, as she passed the dimly
discovered

discovered turrets of the castle—ah! let not the most rigid virtue chide the sigh, the parting sigh, which mixed in her blessing on the inhabitants! for it was pure, and almost as silent as the tear which coursed along her cheek, when she breathed an adieu to the chapel, where now both her parents were entombed!—There appeared to her mind little distinction as to the duration of the farewell, for till her lifeless corpse should be conveyed to the one, she never meant to approach the other;—“Never, oh! never more shall I pass these sacred towers—that holy vault—but when I am enclosed in the unconscious hearse. Farewell. Oh! scenes of anguish and of bliss—farewell.”

CHAPTER LII.

THUS was the ill-fated abbey once more left desolate, although Charles Stuart intended to remain till the family ruins could be put into a somewhat clearer state, than they were left by his unhappy father; and till he saw what might be the event of a trial, in which his curiosity was singularly interested.

interested. He purposed also, at a proper time after the decease of his father, to invite the hand of Johanna from the colonel, her adopted father; and, in the mean time, when that amiable girl, and Mrs. Herbert, could be spared by Olivia, his further plan was, to return with them to their insulated retreat, with a view of affording his sister the consoling society of her accustomed friends, while he should avail himself of John's salutary reproof in regard to his long-neglected military duties.

If, however, returning clouds hung over the abbey, unusual brightness again beamed on the castle. Sacred to his promise, and at length consistent with himself, Henry resigned the care of Caroline to the brother and friends who surrounded her, and dedicated himself entirely to domestic concerns and to Olivia. Whatever yet remained of his unconquered thoughts, such were his actions. In this interval, the hope which his tender and happy wife had promised was fulfilled by the birth of a third child, and being a female infant, the mother resolved it should be baptised

baptised Angelica. "You see," cried John, rejoicing in the event of Olivia's safety, "it was not, my dear Henry, to be a Raphael." At a more confirmed moment of his sister-in-law's health, this was repeated to Olivia, who thus expounded her dream to Henry, mixing in the detail, by suffrage of John, all that related to their secret transactions at the abbey, and their motives, so far as they were known to herself. Previous to the ceremony of christening, Mrs. Herbert and the children were to be sent for from the Bury, and that all might be compleat, she expressed a hope that her favourite Caroline would honour a secret wish she had formed, to become godmother of the young Angelica.

As the departure of Caroline took place so short a time before Olivia's confinement, and as the latter knew she was not in a state of health or spirits to assist her friend in a moment of such trial, it had not been deemed proper by Burton to discompose Mrs. Fitzorton, by any mention of her friend's departure; but as Henry now looked to the
colonel

colonel for the materials of an answer to his wife's requisition, John informed her that a change of air and of objects had made it necessary for her to move from the abbey. "I have a message to deliver on that subject, from my sister," interposed Charles, who was present, though Henry was not then in the room; "I will give it you in her words: for indeed it concerns us all."—

—"We are safely arrived at our place of refuge, my dearest brother, and found the worthy Dennison in the perfect enjoyment of his good old age. The rapture of Floresco, is never, you know, to be described, when his simple heart is moved by nature's powerful hand. And she touched him most tenderly at the sight of his ancient friend, who was not less affectionately though less tumultuously happy. Another ancient friend was gladdened at the view, obscured as it was, of our good old man—poor little Fitz: who bore his long journey passing well. Father Arthur has spared our veteran the particulars of that heavy event, to which, I feel, I am not as resigned as, I know, it is

my duty to be. Alas ! my brother."—Here the lieutenant passed over some sentences in a little confusion, but soon recovered himself and went on.

"I must charge you, my dearest Charles, with answers to the enquiries, which, I cannot but believe, will be made concerning me at the castle, and to explain my wanderings. Let not, I conjure you, the ever-dear and respected Mrs. Fitzorton, nor good Mrs. Herbert, nor my sweet Johanna, attribute my flight to any thing ungrateful or unfriendly. Ah ! it has been from far other motives. So far as you know, let me implore you to explain them, and exculpate your sister and your friend."

"It is enough," said Olivia, "I am ever too selfish. I ought to repine at what has grieved me, but on the subject of my friends I confess myself a very miser. I know that the health, spirits and happiness of my Caroline, required a temporary removal from hence, and I yield. Blessed be her absence ! blessed be her return !

CHAPTER LIH.

IT is become necessary for us to quit again the innocent, and look back upon the guilty. The time of trial for the gang, which had been fully committed, being arrived, they were brought from the county prison where they had been some weeks confined in separate dungeons; and deeds of foulest darkness, as well as their perpetrators were, at length, to see the light.

The crimes of this banditti were of a nature so complicated, and private wrongs so mixed with public offences, that there seems no other mode of detailing them with any clearness, but by adopting the measures, and in some degree the language of the persons who conducted the prosecution, substantiated the charges, or brought the trial to issue.

“The bill on which the prisoners were indicted,” said the counsel who opened the case, “branches into several counts, most of which, taken separately, are capital, but the leading features of offence may be divided
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into three parts, viz. conspiracy, forgery, and murder !”

The prosecutors and witnesses called in support of these heinous offences, were some of the most respectable men in the county ; the persons accused were some of the most daring and infamous that ever disgraced humanity. Amongst the first, were Mr. Partington, John Fitzorton, Charles Stuart, True George, and several worthy domestics from their respective families ; and the gentlemen to whose lot it fell, progressively to discuss, and legally to determine upon the evidence which should be offered, were of integrity so unwarped, that, had a friend, or brother, unfortunately violated the laws, and been brought before them, the most impartial justice would have been administered, although their inward hearts might have bled at the award which that justice impelled.

The leading counsel for the prosecution was Mr. Morgan, the honourable man who had been solicitor to the Fitzortons many years, now advanced to the bar, and whom
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the colonel had already employed to punish some of the enemies, and to reward some of the friends of society : and the judge who happened at that time to be on the western circuit, was James Fitzorton, then arrived at the highest honour and trust of the judicial character.

The first person called upon by Mr. Morgan, to give evidence, was Colonel John Fitzorton, who deposed, that the day after the prisoners were apprehended, he was induced to explore the place where it had been found expedient to secure them. On arriving at the mouth of the dungeon, one of the witnesses, Jonathan Armstrong, who had kept watch through the night, made report, that almost immediately after the raging multitude, and the castle party, had left the spot, an indistinct kind of noise ascended from the cave as of many persons whispering, and groaning faintly ; but though the groaning kind of sounds remained, the voices were soon more low and muttering, as if persons had moved to a greater distance—that, while the voices were loud he looked down into the

the dungeon, and saw a flashing vapoury kind of light as if in the midst of a fog, but when the groans grew fainter the flashing was gone, and only a few misty sparks were left; that very soon after, all was thick darkness, and a dreadful dumb kind of silence has continued ever since. True George, another of the night-guards, corroborated this account; and added, that as he thrust his body downwards into the cell, he was annoyed by a stench as if of sulphur and other combustible matter, from which issued fire and smoke; and the muttering groans, which the former deponent spoke of, seemed to come from the midst of it.

From these, and other reports, which had been previously made, John Fitzorton further deposed, that suspecting something of a criminal nature was yet to be discovered, he selected half a dozen of his friends, and descended armed into the dungeon; several of the villagers following in despite of all remonstrance: that he was prepared to find, from witness, brought by Gapper, the bottom of the gulph much wider than George had

had described it, yet on gaining the bottom, he was amazed to perceive every one of the culprits, who had been thrust into the cave bound, had disappeared. Conducted, however, by Gapper's witness, whose evidence was material, he proceeded further into the cavern, which grew broader at every step. It was vaulted above and below, but every wholesome breeze absorbed by a noxious mist, which clustered so thick around the lights, and hung such heavy damps upon the glass, and horn of the lanterns, or threw such an infectious steam about the torches, that the guide was often at a loss how to direct their steps; that stopping to listen, all was silent; but after moving on a few paces, and then making another pause, a confused murmur of voices assailed his ears—the sounds seemed to issue from different parts of the abyss; when moving onward such scenes presented themselves to the view as augmented the horrors. The objects of his search were found distributed in various forms of misery. Some had crawled beneath a grating which had been made at the top of the

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the dome, into which the effluvia of a stagnant bed of waters, that brooded above, mingled with the polluted air, and rather increased than dispelled the poisons of the dungeon below, by blending therewith the myriads of infectious animalcula that fed on the vapours of the pool. Other wretches, farther on, were extended on the slippery ground, or supporting themselves against the slimy walls, which, in many parts, were covered with concretions of saltpetre.—“We hastened,” said the deponent, “to relieve the victims as soon as we discovered their situation, but how great was our amazement to find every one of them unbound. Irresolute what to do, we were soon invaded by a stench so deadly that it was with difficulty we could save ourselves from falling; and perceiving that it increased as we advanced in that direction, we were bending our course another way, when a hollow kind of yell recalled our attention: alarm gave us force, and we again moved forward. The yell now rather sounded like the collected moans of several persons dying in agony, and became
more

more audible. The tremendous smells too augmented, but two of the witnesses, Floresco and True George, who had fearlessly rushed forward on the first surprise of the groans, returned with marks of horror that absorbed the sense of danger: our female guide too had been earnest with us to penetrate yet deeper into the precipice—pointing at the same time to a jutting wall that seemed to be only at a few paces. We gained the wall with difficulty, and it appeared to bound the prison. Our conductors, however, still pointed forward. The wall was low, and above it ascended a column of smoke mingled with sparks of fire. The moaning was again heard. Floresco and George conducted us by an opening which shelved from the wall, and in an instant we found ourselves in the midst of another distinct narrow dungeon, but the smoke increased to such a degree as to smother even the flame that attempted to labour through it, yet a refreshing air suddenly burst upon our senses, and just as we began to inhale it, a hasty step was heard, and a voice exclaimed, but as if gasping

rushing in of the air, surmounted all obstruction, and illuminated the horrors of the cell. Amongst those horrors we had to enumerate the putrid reliques of a human body, over which the flame threw a livid glare, that not only discovered those relicts, but also other mutilated members which were yet consuming in the fire, and the daring wretch, who seemed to preside over the whole, was, at the moment of discovery, preparing to cast another limb into the flames, and to complete our astonishment, this fury was a woman. "Alas! it is even as I told your honours," then ejaculated the witness, who had been our chief guide, and who was likewise a female. "I knew he must die, and now his murderers are trying to conceal the murder." "Instantly," proceeded the deponent; "every attendant secured one or other of the fugitives, we seized a variety of offensive weapons, and other instruments which lay beside them, and surrounded the principal fiend. She rose undaunted, stood fixed, and seeing us advance kept us a moment at bay, uttering horrible execrations that reverberated through all the windings of the

the dungeon. Overpowered, however, by numbers, she yielded in contemptuous silence: Meantime, one of the banditti—who was trying to escape, and endeavouring to make terms of mercy with George, Jonathan and Floresco, after he was caught, attempted his preservation by informing them “the secret door which they were guarding led to the subterraneous passage, and as he was in the secret of all its labyrinths, he would have the honour to conduct all their honours, not doubting but they would speak a good word for him should their honours think it worth while to take any further notice of the business.” But the indignant George spurning the offer, left the trembling wretch in the custody of Jonathan, while he hastened with the intelligence to our party. Measures were hereupon taken to profit by the information; and the restoring air, having, by this time, in some degree, purged the atmosphere of its deadly obstructions, time was given us to collect, amass, and carry off those more annoying objects, alive and dead, which, fouler than

the breath of pestilence, had polluted the dungeon.

All these circumstances being fully corroborated by the other witnesses, whose depositions were severally taken, the learned counsel then brought forward a body of evidence that established a variety of facts, by which, in substance, it "appeared that the offenders, who had been long engaged in a course of nefarious practices, and in alliance with each other, had formed themselves into a body, under the assumed name and garb of those itinerant cheats called gypsies, the more securely and effectually to carry on an accumulation of delinquency, in every part of which the persons forming the confederacy, had a distinct and separate interest—the whole body being so necessary to each other, that, although in point of situation, many members of the gang had been accustomed to perpetrate their atrocities in the higher, and others in the lowest classes of mankind—a sort of social compact was maintained on the principle of self-preservation; for although each wished all the rest hanged,
not

not wilfully to hang one another was an act of policy, since any attempt to snap or shorten the chain which united them, would be but to convert the indignant links into so many halters for their own necks."

But what was the indignation of the court, and of the assembled multitude, when they saw—and what will be that of the worthy reader, when he finds, that this excavated gang was chiefly formed of those depredators and assassins, who were once associated with the late Sir Guise Stuart?—that the wretch who would have escaped from justice, by impeaching others in the moment of detection, was the execrable Nicholas Dabble? and that the chief female fiend, who was found in the bowels of the earth at her infernal rites, was the daring lady Tempest. "I will take upon me to create a world to-morrow," says an accurate observer, "if to-day I can give rectitude of heart to one pettifogging attorney." And the observation applies no less to one shameless woman, when criminal habits and passions have wholly extinguished the moral principle. Yet, even in characters like

these, the moral principle is not easily annihilated: its destruction is usually the effect of gradual crimes. Sometimes, even after a long and dreadful progression, the keen and avenging sense of right and wrong, asserts its long insulted power, and arouses to shame and remorse; sometimes, with accumulating turpitude, by continuing in dissolute society, the internal guard of our nature is so far subdued, as to want the force of rendering either an abandoned life, or ignominious death, terrible to the offender. Of the former part of this awful truth, the case of Sir Guise Stuart has already furnished an example: and the latter will be but too clearly illustrated in the conduct and destiny of the culprits now under the eye of the reader.

We have briefly to unfold the cause of this horrid confederacy. Valentine Miles, and lady Tempest Stuart, disappointed, disgraced, and traversed in many of their important machinations at the abbey, and at the castle, their hate for some of the inhabitants, and their burning desire for others, survived all their miscarriages, mortifications, and even
punish-

punishments, so effectually, that soon after her ladyship had shaken off her husband, she boldly and avowedly established her hazard, and *rouge et noir* tables, and her pharo bank:—where contribution suppers* and the choicest wines were provided at fifty pounds a route; and she ranked amongst her customers, and subscribers, an indiscriminate mixture of both sexes, from the finished sharper to the raw inexperienced youth! But, amidst all the splendid plunder of the day, and the still more gorgeous ruins of the night, the flames of vengeance and of desire conflagrated her bosom: the stinging thoughts of Olivia's marriage with Henry, and of Caroline's decided passion for him alone, supplied fuel to the one passion; and reflections on her innumerable degradations fed the rage of the other. Her Valentine secretly sympathized in both: they brought into one point of view what they had suffered, from the first outrage to the last.—Miles recurred to the bullet of John Fitzorton, whose mark he yet carried in his neck:—his disgraces at the Adsell

* Vide A treatise on the Police of the Metropolis.

assassination—the scorn with which Caroline received his vows of love—and the snapping of Henry's fingers in the apartments of lady Stuart—then Mrs. Tempest—where he swore that the dearest blood of the offender's heart should one day repay the insult—all tended to accumulate the venom in his breast. Lady Tempest, also, brooded over the contumely she had endured, as well on some of the above, as on various other accounts. Foiled in every attempt to embitter the happiness of Olivia:—her letters intercepted—her feeble stratagems rendered abortive either by True George, or John Fitzorton, and driven by reiterated disappointments to despair:—more particularly since the colonel's conduct and menaces, at the abbey carousals—the collected poisons of her fury far outstript even that of Miles; and the savage passion she yet felt for Henry, mixt strangely with her unquenchable and now maddening thirst of revenge, which burnt the fiercer for being long unappeased. The most dire intents, indeed, had been accumulating in the minds of both Valentine and lady Tempest, before either dared

dared to confide with the other their foul designs. But the moment at last arrived. Both perceived they might communicate. The exchange of one sanguinary look conveyed from eye to eye, and from heart to heart, the dreadful sympathy ! An oath of union past, as by secret intelligence, between them, and they read in every feature, without utterance of a word, that the compact should be cemented by blood. They snatched the hand of each other, and, in that moment, the murder of John and Henry Fitzorton,—and worse then, the murder of Caroline and Olivia,—were determined.

The secret council of blood broke up after passing the following resolutions: To remove every obstruction in the way of compassing the grand desideratum:—To consider every other loss, gain, interest, or difficulty, or danger, as subordinate, till some of the victims were struggling in their arms, and others laid dead at their feet. In pursuit of these demoniac ends, the means were proportionate. The cost, indeed, would be enormous; but avarice was now a secondary passion.

sion. Besides which, the lady's *banks* had literally overflowed of late to such a degree, that the golden tides of half her ruined friends and vanquished enemies, had rolled their treasures into her hand: and Valentine, independent of his share in those more obvious frauds, had learned the science of money-making another way: for with a noble ambition of calling into action all his versatile powers, and shewing they were alike adapted for the business of one part, as for the pleasures of the other part of the metropolis, he had recently engaged in no less than five of the coinages *, out of near half a hundred, that are almost constantly employed in London; and these private mints had been so productive, as often to have yielded him a thousand pounds a week: many of his fabricators creating, and giving currency † to fifty pounds a day, intrinsically not worth fifty shillings. Nay to such a point of perfection had he arrived in this line, that he sometimes procured from the coiners, who worked for him,

* Police of the Metropolis,

† Ibid.

from

from 300l. to 500l. for country orders in the course of the week. Mutually possessed of such resources, the means of accomplishing almost any evil end were thus thrown into the hands of lady Tempest Stuart and her compeer. And though their long-conceived hatred, envy, and jealousy of each other, were by no means abated, a common villany now again held them together more firmly than before; and the amicable way in which they carried it on, might have led superficial observers to believe they had always been, and then were, the very best friends in the world. Dabble, on the other hand, from a run of adversity in a new branch of atrocity, had found more than usual exercise for his little niceties.

Insatiable avarice was the grand vice of this man's character, and to gratify this in every way, and by every mode, of enterprise and exaction, had been the incessant toil of life. But he had been unfortunate since we last saw him—unfortunate in the lottery—from having been the invisible proprietor of some insurance offices; for the

ostensible men of straw, in the shape of receivers and payers, having filled their pockets with the spoil, imitated their employer's great example, and became invisible also. Unfortunate likewise, in advancing money upon bonds, title deeds, and estates in reversion, in hopes of usurious interest—and all this hope broke suddenly under him—then the courts were open only to issue out warrants for apprehending him, and shut against him for ever as a practising attorney: and lastly, with these strokes of ill-luck, he had lost his consequence and credit with my lady and Valentine. Yet the time was now come round when his daily professed, and almost as daily rejected, services were again acceptable. Various inferior instruments, and subordinate wheels in the grand machine of the castle and abbey conspiracy, were now wanted, and Mr. Nicholas Dabble was employed to collect these. The business was opened with very little ceremony; and the terms settled without difficulty. He undertook the thing on speculation, and with unwearied alacrity—and,

and, indeed, in less time than it would cost an honest man to pick up a single rogue; or, indeed, reconcile his feelings to look for one, this active gentleman had ascended and descended into the haunts of as many undertakers as would make honest men wonder how they pass a single day or night, without being assaulted or robbed, wounded or murdered. A chosen band of his old acquaintance, to whom he had before given jobs, and whom he knew to be ready for all vicious occasions at a moment's warning, were mustered, disciplined, and trained to action. The troop was raised from the following personages, most of whom it is probable have a mark set upon them in the reader's memory.—First, the stump-maker and chum, who since their bargain with Jonathan and Jerom, had found their account in assuming their own legs, to run away with parcels of which they tricked boys, shopmen, or persons coming from the country.—Secondly, the ingenious Mr. Smith, who conducted Sir Guise to the
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hand-in-hand*, and who had recently been advanced from stealing goods, as a petty pilferer, to opening a house for receiving such goods, knowing them to be stolen.—Thirdly, Mr. Scuttle, late the waiter at the hand-in-hand, now one of the fifty thousand persons computed to pursue gaming as a trade in London daily.—Fourthly, the lady who acted as foil to the widow, on the memorable night of Henry's visit to the theatre, but who a little before ranked only as one of the fifty thousand females of the metropolis, who are estimated to pursue publickly their abandoned trade.—Fifthly, the two loving brothers, David and Gamaliel Otley, who had been in perpetual strife for the palm of roguery; and who had never been able to settle the point to their own satisfaction, or to any other person's, so nearly equal were their pretensions: each having with the

* One of the ill-regulated public houses, where fraudulent persons find an asylum to consult how and where they are to commit depredations on the public, and of which there are 1000 in London.

most laudable emulation laboured to excel in his vocation, till at length both had ascended the climax, from the theft of a nail, a skewer, a key, or a glass bottle, up to the most valuable articles. There were, also, added to the phalanx, one of the persons known to belong to the fraternity of thieves, whose depredations are calculated to amount to the enormous sum of seven hundred and ten thousand pounds a year. There was, likewise, a professional bludgeon man, and an armed ruffian, who are to be hired for any hazardous enterprize; the terms regulated by the degrees of danger, expected opposition, &c. but who, at other times, assume the trade of hawkers and pedlars, &c. in which character they only cheat and pilfer, but in their former capacity they are to be let out by their proprietors, of which Mr. Dabble was still one, at so much per head, from simple assault to determined assassination. And to close the whole, Mr. Scuttle, the new hand-in-hand landlord, whose fitness for any mischief that might be coining in those
mints

mints of wickedness, the heads of Miles and my lady Stuart, will not be questioned, when the reader is informed, that the lottery insurance committee, both agents and clerks, amounting to near two thousand, met twice a week at his house; and that the bludgeon establishment had there its monthly club.

But while Mr. Dabble was collecting his daring and strong minded bravoës to cover the retreat, or in case of obstinate resistance to proceed to the last extremities, Dabble himself conducting the secret expedition as general of the banditti, under the command of field-marshal Valentine Miles and his associate, the latter was not idle. One of the first loves of lady Stuart was Mr. Thomas, whom she still considered as an old friend, and who had been part of her establishment while she resided at the abbey. He there became acquainted with an under groom of the manor-house, of such promising talents, that he took on himself the trouble of training him to rob his master, and most of his fellow-

fellow-servants of sundry articles, which Mr. Thomas said he would purchase; but when the theft was made, and the spoil presented, he thought proper all at once to scruple—seized upon the young delinquent, and swore he would produce witnesses to prove—though no person had been present at the time,—that he had offered the stolen goods to him, but that he refused to receive them, and only had them in his possession like an honest man, to make discovery. Terrified at this, being then young in crime, the boy supplicated for mercy, which the tender-hearted Mr. Thomas granted on certain conditions;—to wit,—that he should undertake to transact any business he might be trusted with for any part of the castle or manor-house families, and as that trust was faithfully, or unfaithfully discharged, mercy or justice should be administered. The trembling culprit promised, and was almost immediately employed to deliver a letter to Olivia from lady Tempest, which had it fallen into the hands of the former, would have torn up

up the happiness, perhaps, of her whole life by the roots; for it struck a dagger at the faith, honour, and tenderness of Henry Fitzorton in every line. The letter carrier meeting, however, with True George while he was watching his opportunity, Olivia then being at the castle, some suspicious circumstances ensued, which brought on a discovery; and with this, George hurried—the boy in his gripe—to John Fitzorton, who affected to chide George for stopping a servant in discharge of his duty, said the letter should be taken care of, and dismissed the boy, only desiring him to deliver future presents either to him or George, and that for every such packet he should receive a gratuity. The boy promised, and kept his word, being well paid by both parties, without saying a word of his double dealing to either. George thought it strange, till the colonel explained; and thus was Olivia's peace preserved from a train of evils, with jealousy, the hydra, at their head. But this boy advanced too rapidly in the furtive profession which Mr.

Thomas

Thomas had taught him, and was sent away in disgrace. Mr. Thomas himself was expelled soon after, when the abbey arrangements broke up; but he was fated to great preferment, as keeper of a Register-office, and there his old friend the stable-boy came, after many other disgraces, to look for a place. The banditti plan was then beginning to form. Thomas still supposing he had the boy on the hip, recommended him to lady Tempest; he was soon after enrolled amongst the conspirators, for his brilliant suggestions of the gypsy plan,—the subterraneous cavern,—and an assertion that he knew some of those who had really been amongst the abbey tribe. “They are now clippers and coiners,” said the boy; “no longer ago than yesterday, one of them told me my fortune, which was, that I should soon again see the old abbey,—and ecod, if we go upon this expedition the fortune will come true, you know, Mr. Thomas.” In pursuance of his promise, he introduced the *ci-divant* gypsies to Miles and my lady, the former

former of whom recognized five of his money-makers, four of whom were delighted at the thought of another frolic to the abbey, asserting that they could carry on part of their new employment as well in one place as another,—under ground as above ground,—in town or country,—and that they would undertake not only to bring back the gypsey complexion into their own faces, but to tinge every other, as well as dress up all the characters in the true gypsey style, so as to make it impossible for parents to know their children, or children their parents, besides teaching the occult science, and all the cant of the profession, concluding with the following declaration :—“ That they owed John Fitzorton and True George a grudge for some rigorous acts of the former, consequent on the reports of the latter, and would assist in the destruction of both with all their hearts and souls.” The fifth was a very young creature, and followed her associates reluctantly.

The full complement of conspirators was now obtained, and with the different im-
- plements

plements of their different trades and stratagems, and the assistance of the very second-hand cloathes-merchant who supplied Sir Guise Stuart with his quaker apparel, and properly stained, they set forward. They soon established themselves in the abbey-woods without opposition. They had previously gained intelligence of Sir Guise and the return of the whole abbey party, and found means to make themselves masters of the exact state of affairs at the castle and chapel-house. The fiend-like president, in her tenfold disguise, often shot her dire and death-like glances at the victims she had marked as she paced her rounds of the castle, the abbey, and the chapel-house; she felt a horrid joy as she caught a glance at Henry, herself unseen; the pangs of desire agonized her heart, even while she meditated the murder of the object. John Fitzorton, True George, Olivia, Caroline, Charles, and father Arthur, alternately assailed her view as she prowled the wood paths; lighted her fire of withered leaves, or came laden like the rest of her sable companions, with the fallen branches, or with the alms, which for the sake of preserving

preserving her assumed character, she condescended to collect. Her glut of vengeance, indeed, made her forego all claims, and forget all ideas of former self-love. She set the example of hardihood and a disdain of difficulty to the rest. She abstained from every excess, though their rags, and moving furniture, and habitation concealed, were enriched by the choicest fare. These she distributed prudently to the rest, but practised a stern self-denial on her own habits of luxury. Her profuse tresses were darkened by art, and tucked within a dirty coif; and while her grim associates stretched along the woods, or slumbered in the caverns, she still held watch, and passed the night in gloomy vigilance, intent upon her prey. Miles was no less diligent. Dabble, was alternately in every quarter. Every evil spirit was either on guard, or on the scout; thrice was that part of their plan, which respected Henry and John, on the edge of being effected by the silent operation of poisons, but was of necessity suspended. The death of Sir Guise
alone

alone prevented his assassination, and the night of his funeral was at length judged to be most apt for the grand burst of vengeance; but it was broken off by a quarrel amongst themselves. The brother Otleys were still at strife about superiority, but now Gamaliel was endued with a trust more confidential and more intrepid than that of David. To him was allotted the distinction of taking vengeance on John Fitzorton, and a chosen band was appointed him for that enterprize. David expostulated, and threatened to go himself instantly to the castle, and make discovery of the whole plot. He was directly seized by the furious tribe, and till his fate could be determined, the dungeon of the abbey was his prison-house; there they suffered him, either through resentment, or the absorbing image of revenge on others, to die of famine. One of the females, however, less callous than the rest, and who had in a former gypsey expedition attached herself to a youth of the *legitimate* tribe, as those at the castle were called, even with the son of the chief, took pity on his sufferings, and relieved him, but found him almost gasping

ping for breath. "I die," said he, "but let it not be unrevenged on those who have murdered me,—fly this instant,—take with you this bundle of rags, which hold the secret fates of the noblest men,—the loveliest women,—my ancient masters,—my best friends,—all I have wronged,—all who are marked for an almost immediate and dreadful death,—if you would escape the hell that now burns within me, and haply shall burn for ever,—lose not a moment,—away! I die!" The wretch with a despairing hand, seized part of the food which she had brought, and expired devouring it. The terrified Jeputha, so was she called, rushed from the cavern by the secret door, which she had explored, and gaining the woods that united with the subterraneous passage unperceived, and favoured by the night, she followed an impulse she could not resist, not to make her reports at the castle; but accelerated both by horror and affright she travelled onward, nor rested her step till she gained the Bury, where, seeking the tribe who were protected by Partington, she gave
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into the hands of the gypsey-chief and his son, the mystic-papers, which led to the discovery, and by means of which their detestable machinations were prevented. Thus was the ungrateful David Otley appointed to save the lives of those whom he had often betrayed, and whose death he treacherously imagined and devised.

The proofs of these enormities were consummate and manifold: the mutilated limbs, and half-consumed body of the apostate Otley, were upon the spot to establish the murder,—the instruments for the fabrication of base money,—an enormous evil!—so as to counterfeit the current coin of these kingdoms*; the moulds, dies, flatted plates, copper blanks, cream of tartar, phosphorus, &c. &c. intended to prevent one wickedness from being at a stand still while another was in motion, had been all brought from the caverns into court; the villany of Miles as the proprietor of these, and whom, on conviction, his accomplices gave up, was unquestionable. The Proteus Dab-

* Vide Police of the Metropolis.

ble shuddered with consciousness, the moment he beheld John Fitzorton as a prosecutor, Mr. Morgan as counsel, and James Fitzorton as his judge; invention had failed, and even the pettifogging attorney was left without a subterfuge! The inferior members of the banditti, taught to expect the gallows, sooner or later, as a thing of course, felt, without much surprize or emotion, that their time was come; and Tempest Stuart, who had preserved a sullen and savage kind of disdainful silence from the moment she was overpowered, just as she saw the fatal velvet laid on the head of the judge, exclaimed, in a Satanic grandeur, "Had the deed been done, this would have been the most triumphant hour of my life!"

When the criminals, after they had been separated, were brought up collectively to receive sentence,—never has there been passed a final judgment, as to the destiny of this world, with more temper or equity, regulated by wisdom and softened by commiseration, even for the depravity of our fellow-mortals:—never has a verdict been

found more to the satisfaction of all orders of men.

Most of the delinquents were capitally convicted, and remanded to the place from whence they came, till the awful day that should separate them for ever from the community they had so long dishonoured and despoiled; and we will now leave them upon the records of our history, as just, but terrible examples.

CHAPTER LIV.

TO the punishment and ignominy of the vicious, however, succeeded an event of the most unexpected kind, from the relation of which the virtuous must feel a pang.

Olivia Fitzorton had resisted every persuasion of her friend the apothecary, in regard to nourishing her child at her own breast, on account of a pectoral complaint, the only one from which, personally speaking, she had ever felt inconvenience in her whole

life. She argued, that the infant which drew its first and purest nourishment from the bosom of a stranger, was, in effect, but half its mother's child : she hence deemed it a practice so unnatural, as to be but one remove from a sucking babe being turned out of doors by its mother, without any nourishment at all : and " if it be true," would she say, " that any part of the disposition of the foster parent be infused with the milk, the fashion of the times can only be justified when the natural nurse, conscious of a bad constitution, or of a worse heart, trembles at the thought of entailing upon her offspring, her own infirmities of body or of mind ; but, even in that case, she insisted, that the utmost investigation should be made into the health and morals of the woman to whom the child was to be entrusted, otherwise, she conceived, that the real mother was as responsible for the future sorrows, sins, and sickly, or tainted habits of her infant, as if they were more immediately derived from herself. And as to the circumstance of a spoiled shape,

shape, or any other cause assigned by ambitious beauty, or negligent fashion, for the transfer of their offspring to a hireling, she would have blushed with shame, or wept with grief, could any one have judged her capable of covering the vanity of a wife and a parent under so unfeeling an apology."

It is, however, certain, that in a few pulmonary cases, a mother cannot possibly indulge in a more fatal tenderness than to suckle her own child: and an injury which Olivia had in very early youth received, was unfortunately of that kind.

She owned, however, that it was possible she might, in the present instance, be wrong, as she did not feel herself quite so stout as usual, but the custom was so natural in general, that she could not allow herself to be an exception. The infant Angelica, was, therefore, fed from its mother's breast, and exhibited every sign of good health, during the first month: the solemnity, and festival of the christening, at which, on account of Caroline's absence, Johanna became sponsor, was performed, and observed with all the

innocent mirth that affection, decorum, and gratitude could supply. The conduct of her Henry, and of every friend, was all, in effect, that love itself, could, in its fondest solicitude, perform. The child continued thriving to its eighth month, when the hooping-cough weakened it to a degree, that the tender mother was induced to keep it at the breast long after Mr. Burton, and, indeed, the parent's own health had given warning it ought to be weaned: the ravaging disorder, on arriving at its crisis, induced convulsions, which put an end to the life of the babe on the day that it had accomplished its first year. * The physician who had attended, Partington's brother, apprehended that a degree of putridity accompanied inflammation in the last week of the child's disorder, and was earnest with Olivia to suspend her attendance; with this requisition being seconded by Henry, she complied, as he insisted on remaining with her in the apartment, and as he shared the love, to share the danger of a parent. On the first favourable symptom of abating heat, however

ever reported with caution by the good apothecary, the mother flew to the cradle, where seeing lustre in the eye, and bloom on the cheek of her child, although these were but the insidious flushings, and flame, of the malady—she caressed her little Angelica with a mother's ardent sincerity—but, alas, she at the same time drew venom from its lips—Olivia was herself seized with a fever the succeeding evening, which made such devouring progress as to baffle every human aid, and Olivia and her babe, the former almost as free from the tinge of the world as the latter, expired within a few hours of each other.

The suspicion that her disorder was infectious, prevailed neither on Henry nor John Fitzorton to withhold their attendance: the prayers and tears of Olivia could avail nothing with the former—nor was the latter ever absent, but when it was inevitable.—Neither could Johanna or Mrs. Herbert, who had long been returned from the Bury, be deterred from administering to their friend—

the children alone were restrained, and these only because Partington had literally run away with them to the Bury, on the first mention of danger, but came back himself to the castle, and was one of the most assiduous in attempting the preservation of its fairest inhabitant. “ Ah! deny us not—deny not your Henry, at least!—O most good—most excellent—his claims in all you hope, in all you fear!” said he.—“ As I have long lived for you, so I swear to you, best of wives, and parents—would I die!”

But the angel of death had its mandate, and Olivia obeyed. Yet she was in the fullest possession, and almost in the enjoyment, of her reason till within a few minutes of her being removed to regions, where the proudest reach of human thought is as infant feebleness. Her latest powers of mind were employed in assuring her surrounding family—and she desired those who loved her, which, was, in truth, all who knew her, might be assured, also, that, as she had long lived, so was she now dying, the happiest of the happy!

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She tenderly embraced all present in their turn. She joined the hands of Johanna and the lieutenant—of True George, and of her gentle Jane; the latter of whom she embraced twice, and whispered, as if it were the whispering of cherubim, a certainty of seeing, knowing, and loving her, where the society of the good is eternal. Then as the overwhelmed Henry and John approached—she exerted that fortitude, which the faith alone that inspires it can bestow.—“O, unutterably loved and honoured! this would be the moment of hopeless desolation—the moment in which I should quit my being in despair, could I suppose it was that which was to separate me for ever from Henry.”

She paused; and John, who had hitherto borne his agony well, by turns advancing and receding, and as often standing aloof, or sheltered from observation by the croud, at length came forward.

“And thou, O pride and patron of all my happy days!” said Olivia, extending her hand;—“thou art another cause, why I
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should have hope in death—My little ones—bless, bless them, O God!—will have two parents—two—ah! I know not how many good beings will extend towards them a parent's love!—Can they ever want a mother's care, while these kind, generous friends, and my dear absent Caroline, remain on earth?—Ah! my Henry! tell her, whom in dawning life I loved, that with my last remains of breath I bless her—and tell her too,” continued she, exerting herself to become distinct, “that did I not believe her affections were placed in a bosom too wise, too noble to suffer the external forms of devotion, to prove an impediment, now prayer, and penitence, and death, have removed the more substantial obstacle.”

Olivia looked at John, and then proceeded—“My spirit would not fly even to the regions of happiness, in perfect joy but for this, till I had bequeathed her to the father of my children—my dearest, dearest Henry.”

A few minutes only prior to her dissolution, her mind seemed to vibrate betwixt reason and delirium, during which she supplicated

plicated that her dead infant might be brought to her. —“ Poor love! it can do me no harm now,” said she. Her life, indeed, was ebbing fast away, and her physician desired she might be gratified in her request. Accordingly her husband brought the little Angelica, but stood with it at some distance, as if still in fear of its infection. When Olivia perceived a complacent smile on her infant’s face, and declared that “ her dream was out—it has certainly a likeness of Henry,” said she, “ and it will be my guide to happiness eternal—yes, my vision is come to pass. See—see John—the very lineaments of your brother—even as I told you;—the child shall convey its happy mother to heaven—already the crown of glory is encircling me, and now in the blazing sapphire I read—‘ Blessed are the merciful!’—you know the rest.”

She uttered this with a mixture of wildness and coherence, shifting her looks, alternately, from the child to its father, and then to heaven. She beckoned Henry to come nearer.

“There can be no longer any thing to fear or to hope,” said the physician: “indulge her.” Henry advanced with the corpse of his latest born. The eyes of Olivia seemed to settle on both, as if from sensations of joy—then bending towards them, she stretched forth her hands as to receive her child, softly saying—“you will follow us;” and, in the succeeding instant, she yielded up her innocent life in her husband’s arms.

CHAPTER LV.

NEVER, perhaps, has there been since the beginning of time, a death more serene, if we except the few wandering moments that preceded it, and even those seemed to blend the slight sigh of parting life, with a foretaste of heavenly transport; never had there been a life more free from malady or woe: never has there been, nor shall there ever be, a death more generally, or more deservedly, lamented; although, perhaps, after a life so free from evil, and replete with

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good,

good, it is a species of self-love, even if it be not of sinfulness, to grieve that such a spirit is gone to enjoy the fulness of its recompense.

Humanity, however, long and poignantly bewailed its loss ; for not only kindred virtue, but every other that deigns to visit mortals, were votaries at the shrine of Olivia Fitzorton. And, amongst those votaries, none were more sincere than Henry, who not only in the first impressions, but for many months after, seemed so abstracted from himself, as to have not even a thought that divided him from the memory of her, to whose happiness, for the greater part of his life, he had been a generous martyr.

But friendship, gratitude, pity, and all that incites to acts of justice founded on these, demand, that the sacred sorrows of John Fitzorton should not be overlooked.

While the sole being, who had ever truly touched his heart, was taking an eternal leave of him, and the world, not a tear was seen upon his cheek, not a sigh was heard from his bosom, and he was the first to quit the chamber

chamber of death, when that being was no more. Henry, on the contrary, remained beside the body, with one arm still clasping his dead child, in despite of all argument—long after Dr. Partington, and the apothecary, had, in a manner, forced every other person, even the faithful True George, out of the room; but when the physician demanded a conference with the colonel on that subject, John went back into the chamber, and by gentle, yet cogent, accents of persuasion—and asking if he had determined to leave his surviving children without any parent, when they most wanted a father's care? Henry sprung from the bed on which he had thrown himself betwixt his deceased wife and babe, and suffered himself to be conducted into his own apartment.

He had expressed his design to remain there for the rest of the night; but True George, who resolved to sit up with him, had by an inadvertent expression changed his purpose. “When do they talk,” questioned Henry, “of taking the remains of my wife and child from me?” “Alas! to-morrow,

your

your honour," answered the afflicted George, "because, as it is thought they died of something that was catching, Dr. Partington, and Mr. Burton, say it will not be right for them to stay long in the castle—but, for my part, if it was not for your honour, and another person or two, I should wish to catch the malady that I might die too! for I don't find any thing a person gets by living here in this world but seeing people one loves go, one after another, out of it."

Henry, who had not taken off his cloaths, scarcely staid long enough to hear the whole of George's reflections, but attending chiefly to the information which preceded them—he declared his wish to take his last leave of the remains of Olivia, and her little one—"and there can be no opportunity so favourable as the moment before us," said he: Henry went into Olivia's chamber attended by George, whom, however, he beckoned to stop at the door, which being partly opened, Henry moved forward with cautious and trembling steps, as if fearful of disturbing those who were in the sleep of death.

death. As he was approaching the bed, he beheld John bending over it on the side he had himself entered. Checked by surprise and awe, he suspended his step, and distinctly heard the words which his brother was uttering.

They breathed over the dead body of Olivia the first declaration of love. They recapitulated the conduct which that love had urged, to preserve the peace of its object unbroken to the last moment of her life. "And if, O! sacred spirit," said the lover, addressing the corpse, of which he had taken up one of the lifeless hands, and laid it on his bosom—"if in the unencouraged but resistless feelings, a sentiment more tender than brother ever felt—perhaps ever can feel,—has sometimes assailed my heart, and aught of blame should still attach, to eternally combated, and involuntary emotion, let thy now angel prayers intercede with the bestower of that heart to absolve my frailty! yet how can error mix with a principle which at this moment that I am beholding thee a breathless corpse hastening
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to decay, making that corpse more welcome to my eye, more precious to my soul, than all thou hast left behind thee to bloom in health, and youth, and beauty? Ah, no! like the soul itself my affection shall be eternal, attend me as in thy life time here, and follow thee to other worlds."

John had turned his head, somewhat startled; for Henry, impelled by his feelings, came onward. The Colonel had still retained one of Olivia's hands. "Henry," said he, "you have discovered my passion: you now perceive that a wretch, more disastrous than yourself, had really being.—Behold the victim! behold too the object of his affection. But she is no more thy wife, my brother: death hath dissolved the bond that made her fond and faithful hand appropriate to Henry. Alas! it is mouldring into nought. The ascended spirit, therefore, which has left it, is now our object—that too is free of human ties except by heavenly sympathy; and those who still love her must share with myriads, with all the host of heaven."

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The brothers tenderly embraced. John pressed Olivia's hand yet more fondly, and gently replacing it by her side, withdrew from the bed to the window, turning his eyes on the body as he walked from it. He lingered a moment, passed the chamber, and disappeared, then re-entered—receded again, and again advanced. Henry knelt down by the side of the bed, and caressed by turns Olivia and Angelica, then put one of the infant's arms within the clasp of its mother's in the position he had found it. "Forgive me! angel soul of her," said he, "who once gave almost matchless beauty to this lifeless form.—O! forgive me, if I was less sensible to those wondrous graces than they deserved! thou now art, haply, conscious of the motive, and will pardon what constancy to former vows, and unconquerable love of their object alone could cause. Had those vows been thine the boasted beauties of the earth—the earth itself would have wanted power to draw me deliberately from thee."

John,

John, who had a second time returned, heard in turn this declaration, and when it was closed ran hastily to his brother, pressed him with the utmost affection to his bosom, and wept. They left the sacred chamber together, turning at every step, but when John had ordered the attendants, who were waiting without, to return into Olivia's apartment to watch the bodies, and had conducted Henry into his own chamber, at the door of which the unwearied George was waiting his master's return—"Brother," said he, "I feel an assurance, not of this world, that our prayers are heard, our penitence accepted! for the rest our weakness must have way—and our pillow may be steeped in the tears of our frailty, because we are still of the earth—but happy as was our Olivia, how faint, how feeble, the most distinguished moments of that felicity to the bliss she now enjoys! Let us part in peace. If John Fitz-orton can reconcile himself to her loss it ought to be supportable to Henry."

On the evening, however, of the succeeding day Henry shewed signs of the disorder
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we have alluded to, and Dr. Partington's brother, the physician, as well as the good apothecary, determined it to be the result of incautious attendance in Olivia's apartment. John, and the rest of the family, and its friends, escaped, but the more irritable Henry caught the malady, and was its prey for several months—during which not one of his friends of the Abbey, Bury, or Castle, could be persuaded by any warnings of danger to leave him. He remained almost a year with alternations of weakness and strength, and when his body might be called convalescent his mind appeared still to suffer from an incurable wound. Charles Stuart, the almost constant attendant of his pillow, observed this, and imparted it to the colonel, who, watching by his bed-side a favourable interval, kindly took his hand, and thus addressed him :—

“ I have attended with pleasure, my dear Henry, to the progress of your returning health; but that pleasure has been, and is still, checked by what I have observed—a solicitude—a misery, not the effect of the
weak-

weakness which mere illness leaves behind, still bends you to the earth. My brother, we are left to the support and consolation of each other; confide to me the cause, and let me see if it cannot be removed—perhaps the incapacitating powers of a severe and tedious malady have too long robbed you of the solace of your accustomed employments—infirmity doth still neglect all office: from the sick pillow, even the muse will take her flight—the friend and inspirer of our gayer hours, and of our youthful enthusiasms, our play of fancy, and our flow of spirit—yes, she, like other faithless mistresses, often leaves her votaries when they can no longer administer to her vanity, or soothe her with melodious adulations. I say not this in mockery of her art; for I have long ceased to attack even the vulnerable parts of her magic, since the day that I saw my brother wounded in spirit, beyond the reach of sportive ridicule or serious remonstrance—since I saw that he was not simply the victim of that dire system of sentimental insanity, which men of feverish imaginations have opposed to

to the fortitude of human beings, and the duty of christians—since I noted his resolution to drink of the bitter cup that ‘ might not pass from him ;’ — earnest to turn to pious advantage the trials of Providence, and relinquish the thought of spurning its dispensations by flying into the presence of the power who appointed them, I have forborne to take from any thing, that might be encouraged, its power of diverting you—but something more important than science or song now calls upon my Henry’s powers. He has a heart to feel that one real charity shewn to the lowest of the sons of men, in the most desolate corner of the earth, though it were but to carry into a hut the comfort of a single morsel, when that morsel was wanted, and deserved, returns to the restorer a transport more sincere, and presents to him an image more resplendent, than all the pictures of bounty which the elect of Apollo ever painted, or, shall I say, that realizes the painting and poesy of the most happy and benevolent muse, whose best fount of inspiration is a generous heart ; the cottages, and
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the cottagers of our now angel friend—we should learn to speak of her, as we do of heaven itself—with chastened pleasure—yet devoid of grief,” continued John, sighing—“ I say, my brother, these cottagers—and, perhaps, more than these—are devolved on you—it would gladden your heart to hear their daily, hourly, enquiries—to see the confirmations of their grateful love—and a continuance of all their joys shall again be yours.”

“ My dear, dearest brother !” exclaimed Henry, embracing him.—“ But even the exercise of bounty,” continued John, “ rich as it is in happiness, cannot wholly occupy an active mind. Short as life is, it will be found too long for every man who wants employment proportioned to his powers. How shall I again bring forward what has so often been unsuccessfully proposed to you ? how shall I remind you that—while you have generously obeyed our blessed father in, perhaps, a hard command, you still are disobedient in regard to another not so rigorous ?” “ I obeyed him according to my

my promise," answered Henry, "in all that was possible; I resisted only that which, even, at the time of the command, was beyond the reach of my obedience—else, so awful was the moment, at which I received his last commands, and so little power had I to advert to myself when I beheld him leaving me for ever, that had a thousand more sacrifices been exacted, I should have promised to become the victim of them all."

"I do not comprehend you," said John.—

"It could not be beyond your power to enter into that profession for which you had been designed; and although we all observed a negligence in your preparations, I have, for my own part, always imputed it to your former perplexed situation, and a too vigorous pursuit of other studies. There was, indeed, a time when I could not but think your devotion to the muse interrupted devotion of a higher kind." "Never! God forbid!" answered Henry. "I trust," resumed John, "you did not withdraw from the sacred path in which your father walked with so much honour, to compliment the
faith

faith of any other person, however dear the object."

Henry sprung up in his bed, withdrawing his hand with some force from the clasp of his brother. "Compliment away my faith! fie, fie!—no, sir!—no, John!" said he,— "nor would the object to whom you alluded have accepted—she would have spurned the compliment—scorned the man who could insult her with the offer." John was extremely moved. "Forgive, dear Henry, forgive me," said he; "my harsh qualities you perceive are not yet all subdued. Let us proceed like brothers, you know the reasons which have closed my lips on subjects that I knew were of deep concern to you: but I did not close my eyes. I have not passed over Caroline Stuart, amongst unheeded things. I have observed her in the hours of varied trial, of hard temptation—I have noticed her often willing to yield her life, but never to swerve from any of its duties—I have beheld that life sinking gradually away, against all her exerted powers to preserve it, because its preservation was the

command of God; even while, for herself, existence wanted every comfort of health, and every relief of hope—when, indeed, she repelled hope, because it was error to harbour, and crime to encourage it.” The colonel perceiving his brother much agitated, beseeched him to hear what he had farther to offer with patience. “In a thousand points, my Henry,” continued he, “this has been the victim which has surpassed us all in suffering, and in suffering well; and I have, for some time, ceased to wonder at your attachment, taking into consideration the early impression by which it was formed: but it was against all order, all rectitude, all sacred laws that I should tell you so before.”

Here, embracing Henry, he proceeded to inform him how he had contemplated this subject—“Thus have I argued,” said John, “I have not been unfaithful even to my second impressions, why should my brother be inconstant to his first? and what has a difference of religious belief to do with religion itself? when I thought oppositely to this, did I not think narrowly? did I not think

think wrong? have I not since found the essence of devotion the same in the catholic father Arthur, and the protestant Sir Armine? and was not the latter heavily mistaken in this objection? surely, had this been the only one it might have yielded to the discussions of reason and truth. But there were, alas, so many others—and some so horrible”——

“O, my ever generous and good protector,” interrupted Henry, “it has been my fate through life to be entangled in the mazes of involuntary secrets, inevitable mysteries, another is yet behind, and that had been shut up for ever in the few hearts to which it has been confided, had the cause continued which made it at first, and for so many years continued it a private concern to that heart alone. We have all of us had, perhaps, in some points, too little domestic confidence. The secrets of our family have been also, secrets to ourselves, and exacted from us by events. Reserves beget reserve: though in our perplexed state of general counteraction, the most unbounded confi-

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dence would have little availed. No, I did not compliment away my religion, but the faith of her I loved—became MINE.”

“ Brother !” ejaculated John. “ Mine,” resumed Henry, “ on contemplation—on choice,—I adopted it in the very conviction of my heart—I observed it operate on the age of father Arthur—on the youth of Caroline—and, although, I saw the same spirit, differing in a few ceremonies, influence the no less pious life of my venerable father, and shed grace divine on the conduct of Olivia—I was affected even by the forms which the protestant church rejects, and on the day that Caroline Stuart heard my vows of love, I made with my own heart those vows which even to this day she has not heard, that our religion should be one. Hence my long postponement—against all remonstrance—during the life-time of my father, of carrying into effect one part of his plan for me, although I did not deem it right—when I found communication would only have embittered the remains of his life—to betray my secret.”

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“Then you are catholic,” said John; “and by whom may you have been professed?” “By no one,” answered Henry. “To one alone I imparted my feelings.” “Father Arthur, I presume,” exclaimed John, scornfully. “I am eager for his reply.” “It was brief,” cried Henry. “He told me it would violate the sanctity of his own belief in things most holy, were he to dissuade; and it would trench on his conduct as a neighbour, and a friend of Sir Armine Fitzorton, a distinguished member of the church of England, to countenance what I had confided: ‘Your confidence in me is safe,’ said he, ‘but I can give no council.’” “I had my fears,” cried John. “I am glad I wronged him. O, if you thought him accessory to my resolves, you did, indeed, wrong him.” answered Henry—“I urged him to tell me if he thought I was proceeding in the right path?” “I trust in God we are all doing so,” he answered. “I importuned him to admit me to his chapel at his hours of prayer. ‘You press me hardly, youth,’ said he. ‘I will not invite: I dare

not exclude. The temple in which your pious father adores the Almighty, would not be shut against a catholic suppliant, who might wish to enter. Can I close the door of mine upon a protestant votary?"

"Noble Arthur, Then you are not in verity a papist?" questioned John.

"In verity?" answered Henry, "what call you truth? Is it not from within? What mean you by vows? Do the words and external signs by which they are expressed, make them bonds, or give them sanctity?"

Henry took from under his pillow a crucifix, and then resumed his questions.

"Derive those vows any hallowed potency from this frail image of him, to whose real essence they were offered? Are they not all consecrated by the heart? As I was not absolutely banished from the chapel I attended, though, I am ashamed to say, by stealth, both its matin and vesper duties. The monk one day demanded, If I had yet consulted with Sir Armine? I owned that I knew his steadiness of faith too well to dare

dare communicate. "I dare," answered the monk. But on my promising, that before I again joined his congregation in that way, my father's consent should be attained, or I would bring proof it should be no longer expedient to solicit it: he was silent on the subject. I withdrew, however, from all public forms, and communed only with myself. My nuptials, no longer to be postponed, and impossible to be prevented, took place. I yielded up every thing in that hour—that moment—but what I could not change—my love and my religion. Those were in the sanctuary of my own heart. Excuse, brother, this prolixity: the occasion claims it—and it unfolds to you a thousand mysteries in my conduct. Respect my sincerity, should you blame my election: I am no example to others, but I am true to my own belief.

"God knows," replied John, "which of us is most in the right: but it is clear to me, that, although I give you full credit for your feelings—and pity from my soul

all you must have suffered to conceal them, it appears very clear, that had Caroline Stuart been a protestant, you would never have been a catholic. We will not, however, discuss the point farther; for I am brought round to what I at first proposed to mention, by a very circuitous way. It has pleased the Omnipotent, my brother, to remove many apparently insuperable impediments; and the most inauspicious passion that, perhaps, the human heart ever set out with; as its only hope in the morning of life, has risen above several of the darkest clouds in the noon of your days. There is every reason to believe a renewal of your affections, now they may be innocently offered, would not be unacceptable to her, for whom, doubtless, your love can easily be revived."—"Revived," exclaimed Henry.

"I will have one of my solitary thoughts on this matter," resumed John, smiling, but his face pallid, and care upon his brow. "Meantime be assured that I shall not allow you to suffer any pain, or forego
any

any pleasure, when it is consistent, and within my power to prevent the one and promote the other."

By such means was Henry relieved from the last, and one of the most burthensome mysteries that had ever hung upon his heart; and thus too, were again opened prospects, on which he had not even dared to cast his eyes, or voluntarily fix his thoughts, for many years.

It was amongst his brother John's maxims, never to hint a promise without good likelihood of its being in his power to perform it, and as the result of his meditation on the above subject, was a belief that Henry Fitzorton and Caroline Stuart, after all their sacrifices and sufferings, deserved to come together; and as their union no longer seemed to oppose any other duty, could not, he hoped, be offensive even to the spirits of his father, or of Olivia, which if conscious of the projecting design, were conscious, also, of the long reverence shewn to, and, at length, the honourable removal of, every former barrier. As the last balm,

therefore, which could be poured over his own wounds, John set on foot a treaty, with the assistance of the lieutenant, that might at length heal those of his brother and friend.

CHAPTER LVI.

IN pursuance of this plan, he wrote to father Arthur a letter, of which Charles Stuart himself promised to be the bearer :

‘ MY DEAR AND REVEREND SIR,

‘ The important—I will not, since they
‘ were the designations of heaven, call
‘ them unfortunate events, which have hap-
‘ pened in our family since your departure,
‘ have, probably, been described to you
‘ by our Johanna, or some other of our
‘ friends : they will be more particularly
‘ detailed by the friendly bearer of this
‘ letter ; which is to tell you that I no
‘ longer see any reason to prevent Henry
‘ Fitzorton and Caroline Stuart from be-
‘ coming man and wife ; nor have I now
‘ any objection to their being united, ac-
‘ cording

‘ cording to the forms and ceremonies of
‘ the catholic church. This declaration will
‘ serve to shew that I am in the confi-
‘ dence both of the love and religion of
‘ my brother, and chastened as both have
‘ been, by almost every species of trial,
‘ from the sacred hand of God himself,
‘ I shall no more presume to oppose my-
‘ self to either: and in doing this, not-
‘ withstanding all past horrors, I humbly
‘ trust that I shall offend neither the living
‘ nor the dead. Implacability is inconsistent
‘ with divine natures; and if penitence can
‘ receive pardon from God, it should surely
‘ be sufficient to the forgiveness of men
‘ made angels: and that the recompense we
‘ are preparing for long-suffering worth,
‘ will be pleasing to the spirits of peace.
‘ The reward which is now preparing
‘ for the happiness of those whose hearts
‘ have been proved, must owe much to
‘ your manner of representing to miss Stuart,
‘ the several mysterious truths—mysterious,
‘ alas! to mortals—but of easy process to
‘ that heavenly director, who conducts the

‘ apparently irreconcilable interests of un-
‘ numbered worlds. To your wisdom and
‘ loving-kindness, I submit the furtherance
‘ of the measure proposed. Our worthy
‘ Charles will readily be your auxiliary;
‘ and he is, moreover, charged with some
‘ proposed arrangements, as well regarding
‘ his own plans of establishment, as that of
‘ his friends.

‘ Venerable and respectable man,

‘ Farewell.’

The generous writer of this epistle looked upon the object it was intended to accomplish, as so nearly a good obtained, that he could not withhold its contents from Henry, because they would, in effect, convey his own sentiments, while they sanctioned those of his brother. The lieutenant was, therefore, dispatched to Henry’s room; and after the two friends had conferred, no time was lost in preparations, or in performance of the journey. True George, now seeing his master make rapid advances towards health, supplicated to be
the

the lieutenant's attendant, and the next morning they set out.

But while the house of Fitzorton had been, alternately, the residence of hope and fear, and every extreme of sorrow and of joy; in the refuge of Arthur—in an obscure nook of the world—the most serious and important events had taken place. Alas! where is that corner of the globe exempt from changes of which the globe itself is the victim?

On the arrival of the lieutenant and True George at the island recess, to which they passed immediately from Dartmouth, neither Arthur nor Caroline were to be found. The landlord had taken possession of his house; and from him, our astonished travellers understood that “his reverence, and the family, had left the island finally, about six weeks ago. That the lady Caroline had departed a month before, but that the monk came to fetch his young black, and his old steward, and the little old dog, they all made so much of; and to give up the house, paying, however, the rent to the
utter-

uttermost farthing." "And whither are they gone?" questioned the lieutenant.—
"Why, your honour," answered the landlord, taking a slip of paper from his pocket-book, this is the place, where I was, as occasion served, to send letters; but though all them, pointing to a packet in the parlour window, have arrived, no opportunity of forwarding them has happened since his reverence went last away." The lieutenant now saw letters in the characters of Mrs. Herbert and Johanna, and read with increased amazement, the following address, in the monk's own hand-writing: 'Pere Arthur, maison de poste a Coutance, Bas Normandie.' While Charles was reflecting what could possibly be the motive that directed them to that part of the world, and without having confided in any of their mutual friends, or in himself as a brother, a letter, which had just come in by the English packet, was delivered to him containing these words:

‘ MY DEAR FRIEND,

‘ The enclosed reached the castle within
‘ an hour after you had left it. It is mani-
‘ festly the hand writing of father Arthur,
‘ but the foreign post marks, and the route
‘ by which it appears to have come has
‘ puzzled us. ‘ Farewell,

‘ John Fitzorton.

‘ The word *dispatch* was written in the
postscript by Henry.’

The enclosure alluded to conveyed intelligence which required dispatch indeed. It informed the lieutenant of a circumstance the very date of which shook his whole frame on the first glance, and when he had hastily put it under a cover for the castle, to go by the returning mail, he enquired on the quay after the possible means of getting to the coast of France? A vessel which had come in a few days before from St. Malo's, was to return by way of Coutance when the wind would permit, but it was not till after waiting ten
7 days

days—ten fatal days—in the most anxious suspense that the vessel could get out of the harbour; a favourable breeze, however, at length, sprung up, and they got to sea, and the gale increasing, they gained the long desired port.

The moment after Charles and his attendant had reached the land, they desired one of the porters whom they saw on the beach, to conduct them to the Post-office in the direction, which corresponded with what was given in the letter, and after a few minutes' walking they came to the Priory-house, where they found the still blameless Priest with his Indian, and old Dennison sitting beside him. "My son," said father Arthur, "I expected you would follow our letter, and I am glad at heart to find by your appearing amongst us, it has been received." "I will not," observed the agitated Charles, "I come not, to question your judgment or your wisdom,—I come only to ask, why you have withheld from me a circumstance, or any previous knowledge, on which the happiness of a sister,

sister, and perhaps the life of my bosom-friend entirely depend? But there is no time for words: let me implore you by whatever is most holy, to stop your rash proceedings!"—"What you call rashness," exclaimed Arthur, "is in itself most holy, and temerity would consist in the conduct you recommend. I thought your sister had stated her duty, yours, and my own, in the letter which you acknowledge to have received,—she there told you under what authority I acted,—I am sorry to find you dispute it."—"Talk not to me of authorities, sir!" demanded the lieutenant, yielding to the impetuosity of his character, and forgetting for a moment to whom he spoke—"Where is my sister?"—"She is under protection," replied Arthur.—"I thought, sir, I was her only natural protector!" resumed Charles, "under whom could she be more secure?"—"Under his whom she has sought," returned the Monk, "under that of her God. Slightly must you have perused what either she or I have written, or else you

you would blush, would tremble to ask that question."

"How could I hear of my sister's having clandestinely, and by your connivance, shut herself up within the walls of a cloyster?—from thence was her cruel letter dated. I had not patience to read the dire particulars;—at such a moment too,—misguided girl! when, but for this abhorred seclusion, we might all have been happy."—"I understand you not," said Arthur, "what moment, and what happiness? I assert, young man, that had you paid due respect to my greeting, it would have made known to you the awful calls upon me, to accompany your sister from the place of her former refuge to one yet more sacred; you would there have been taught to pay more respect to her motives of devoting herself, and to mine in conducting her to the cloyster; but there she must remain. I know my duty, and will maintain it."

The door of the house had been left unclosed on entrance of the lieutenant, while the father, with an expostulating, determined,

mined, and somewhat of a rebuking voice, was pronouncing the last sentence, another voice, which was in an instant known to be that of Henry Fitzorton, ejaculated—"Cloyster!"—"O, holy man!" interposed a third voice, which proceeded from the colonel, "those motives are respected,—respected even by this, my poor diseased, distracted brother, even though he is, alas! their sacrifice."—"Cloyster! Is she then already entombed?" reiterated Henry, who now fell into the arms of True George, while Dennison and Floresco, Charles, the colonel and the apothecary, and father Arthur, hastened to his relief. "Alas!" said the colonel, "from your anxiety, Charles, to convey the tidings of Caroline's destiny, to your friends at Fitzorton, you directed your packet to Henry instead of John, and all was abruptly discovered; my poor brother was then struggling with the remnant of his disorder, but persisted on taking an immediate journey and voyage to this place, and in relief of his despair, we have all followed. Alas! his present situation too plainly

plainly proves our efforts have been vain.” —“My dear master revives,” cried True George, interrupting John’s relation.—“She is lost then!” said Henry, “even in the moment when miracles appeared to have been wrought to save us both!” His paroxysm now returned, and at the instance of Mr. Burton he was conducted by the attendants to Dennison’s own bed, while the afflicted colonel proceeded to inform Arthur, that no entreaties could dissuade his brother Henry from coming over, that he was even frantic at opposition, protesting that if he arrived too late, his death near the wall where Caroline had shut herself eternally from him, would be his whole wish, and if he was prosperous in his journey, that prosperity would be his cure. “There was no reasoning with an insane, who set his life at naught,” said the colonel, “I saw him desperate, and to avoid something more immediately fatal, I was engaged by our good apothecary’s counsel in an act of desperation. We hurried to the proper port, where finding no vessel destined for France,

we hired a fishing-boat, and like despairing adventurers, we trusted ourselves to a troubled sea under no one auspices of happy fortune, but that the wind, though turbulent, was fair:—and we are come safe,—alas! to what end?—Caroline is in her cell!”—“It is indeed true,” answered the wondering Arthur, “Caroline has devoted herself; and when she entered her convent I did not think, sir, that any possible event of this world would make me heave a sigh at what she has felt it right to do; and, although I grieve, even from my utmost soul, that my ever-respected Henry should be thus wrought upon,—the whole mass of things I see and hear, with respect to his happiness with Caroline Stuart,—your countenance of that connexion,—the intemperate,—I had almost said, the indecent rage of the lieutenant, are so strange, new, inconsistent, and apparently impossible, that a more extraordinary mystery than has ever yet involved us, is now before my eyes.”

“Our

“Our letters must surely have informed you,” said John.

“I have received some from the castle,” interposed the monk, “and so has the devoted Caroline; but when her resolution was once formed, I deemed it prudent, not to intrude upon her any thing of a nature too interesting in regard to the world, of which she desired to take an eternal leave, so that for many of the past months, we are both utterly ignorant of every occurrence which may have taken place either at the abbey or the castle.”—
“Gracious heaven!” exclaimed John,—
“then you know not, perhaps, that Olivia——”

The lieutenant came into the room saying, his friend was more composed, and wished earnestly to confer with father Arthur in his chamber; “but I cannot,” said Charles, “suffer him to depart until I have thus in the humblest manner supplicated forgiveness for my late ungoverned rage.” “That rage has chastised itself,” said the holy man, stretching forth his hands to receive the folded ones
of

of Charles; "shall not a loving father forgive his child an offence which sorrow and affection caused?" They embraced, and the lieutenant delivered the letters he had brought from the recess. "Oh! had I received these, and read some former ones sooner," observed Arthur, sighing, "something might have been avoided. Still all is mystery. Return to your suffering friend, my child, and tell him I will peruse my letters, and attend him. It were wicked to deceive, and therefore touch not the theme that may lead him to delusion. I crave your promise, colonel, somewhat longer, to guide me through a labyrinth to whose mazes I have yet no clue." "I will but accompany the lieutenant into my brother's room, and return," said the colonel. But the papers delivered, soon dilated the train of incidents. The mysteries were explained, but the regrets were multiplied. John Fitzorton came back. "Alas!" said Arthur, "what combination has been formed against us! or rather, my friend, how short is the foresight? how frail the wisdom
of

of mortals to pronounce what is most for their happiness! I sigh, sir; mine eyes have wept at what I have already seen,—my heart swells while I speak, yet I know not how I may offend the all-disposer, by thus lamenting his heavenly will;—ah! who shall dare to say that the seemingly agonizing turns of life, the heaviest deprivations of death, the early ascension of Olivia to heaven, and the eternal retirement of Caroline from the world, are not blessings at which we should rejoice, and at which it is impious to repine?”

Henry had desired True George, and the lieutenant, to lead him to Arthur immediately on the colonel's leaving the room, so that he came into the parlour time enough to hear great part of what the holy father had said. He attempted not to controvert the reasoning; he disputed not the piety of the reflections, but faint, weak, and despairing, he implored Arthur to save him if it were yet within his power—“And if it be not,” exclaimed the unfortunate, “I have a thought which I hope, without outrage to God or
man,

man, I may indulge—'tis my only alternative: yet it shall be done. Father I am resolved."

This was uttered betwixt wildness, and collected solemnity, but the effect was awful. "Hear me with fortitude and patience," said Arthur, addressing himself to Henry, after a profound pause—"all that I can I will. There is but one being whom I would serve and obey with more willingness than Henry Fitzorton. The meek and pious Caroline Stuart, for the reasons she has assigned, has withdrawn herself from the world: she has nearly performed her novitiate. Her year of probation expires on the morrow." "The morrow!" exclaimed Henry—"Even so my child—we are in the eve of everlasting seclusion," said Arthur. "O God!" cried Henry—"She has already signified her solemn intention to take the veil, and is upon the point of pronouncing her vows." Henry could scarcely be held from sinking to the ground, though Dennison and Floresco were assisting True George to support him: for the lieutenant was hardly

able to sustain himself: and John was unusually disturbed. "This night, however, at the twelfth hour I am to meet her in the confessional after midnight prayers: I have here a copy of her profession of faith. Indulge not these false hopes, should she stand solemnly fixed to her purpose. I will not, dare not, interrupt it." Henry chilled with horror. "But there are yet some hours betwixt the preparation and the act," said the monk: "the choice of becoming a recluse, or of returning to the world is still left her; and although it is unusually late to place even in the view of a devotee any temporal scenes or objects, that may lead her back to sublunary feelings—and still more uncommon for her confessor to bring them under her eyes, I still hold it innocent to let her know that great and extraordinary events have taken place at Fitzorton castle.—Nay, I will offer her the perusal of her benefactor the colonel's letter, and then leave her spirit free to act upon the whole of the circumstances. It is a case of affliction and of love, my children, apart from all others I have known, and I will

will shew it peculiar indulgence. But I must inhibit all effusions of passion, and expect you will all remain unobserved, and undiscovered, in this house, which I have borrowed of my ancient friend, the abbot of the priory. Yet remember Caroline Stuart has, for twelve hard-trying months, conformed to an order not lenient, though not rigorous: she is preparing to embrace yet more austerities. She is even now to be looked upon as a being nearly out of the pale of terrestrial things. I must not have her sensibility seduced. One strong and deciding question shall be put to her, even in this the most holy, and awful moment of her life; if she answers in favour of the world, she shall receive no discountenance; if she has so settled her steadfast soul that all earthly objects—even those once most precious—have receded from her—and such instances are not rare—even in the reign of beauty and of youth I have seen them fade away, and become extinguished—should that be the case with the devoted Caroline, not one persuasive word shall be used by me to over-rule her election. I can

no more, my love, my gratitude, and my compassion, will have done their utmost."

"Hark!" exclaimed Arthur, "that is the clock of her convent. It is only a few paces distant from this house, a door of the priory opens on it. Listen. It is the twelfth hour.—I must obey its summons. Caroline is exact."

The sounds entered the soul of every hearer—and the pious man, after assuring his friends he would return to them with a faithful report, and exhorting them to believe, that whatever direction it might take would be ultimately the best, he commended their spirits to the angel of peace, and passing from the abbot's house into the priory, entered the convent of visitation where Caroline was enclosed.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE terrors of suspense have been justly numbered amongst the least supportable of the miseries of life. Never could they have been felt more acutely than they were

were by the sorrowful society which now filled the house which Arthur had borrowed of his episcopal friend. Nor could any member of that society offer substantial consolation to the other. The aged Dennison knew that Caroline, had she not been his attendant, nay his nurse, during a sickness which he himself had suffered, would have secluded herself some weeks sooner: Floresco's honest nature could only lead him, in this instance, to silent prayer—for he had listened to his master's words, which sunk into his heart as the words of him whose law they expounded: the apothecary and John Fitzorton, were too well acquainted with the constancy of Caroline Stuart to ground a reasonable hope, or, indeed, almost to suffer any hope, that her confessor would represent the change of affairs, with such moving circumstances, as to warrant any change in his devotee. The lieutenant was silent, and abashed, from a sense of his own former irreverent behaviour:—and Henry, who had long since believed no incident of the future could exceed, or even equal, the past in that sickness of conjecture

and of dread, which uncertainty occasions, now found that the interval betwixt the departure and the return of the confessor from the convent of the confessed, was the most tremendous point of time in his life. The solemn pause was variously filled up by the expectants. The colonel retired to a remote corner of the room, covered his eyes with his hands, and, except now and then starting up to press the hand of his brother, remained fixed in thought. Dennison and Floresco, somewhat relieved themselves by assisting the servant of the house to prepare refreshments. Henry walked backwards and forwards, or sat abruptly down—now uplifted, and now wrung his hands—but when the table was covered, and he had taken a chair near it to rest upon one of his arms, he heard a feeble sound, yet rather of joy than sadness, come from under the table, and in the next instant he felt the tongue of the animal, from whom the sound had issued, licking his hand. “Is it possible,” exclaimed Henry, starting up, “that I should again embrace thee, little Fitz?”

art thou still alive!—O welcome, welcome! be it a good omen!”

“Yes, him’s is alive, poor ickle ting,” said Floresco,—“him only come from missey’s convent the other day—see—good sir squire, that is him’s ickle bed—all fatin, and cotton, and wool, as soft as him’s own ickle old head—do but feel him’s; and, lookee, sir squire, him’s bed is made by him’s lady’s—own lady—and him’s was brought here in it by master, our good, good father Arthur, under him’s cloak.”

As Floresco brought forward a light to inspect the spaniel’s bed, Henry knew it to be the same which he had seen in early days—a device of the dove and the olive, emblems of love and peace, and the initial letters H and C, twined, and yet cautiously involved in well-wrought laurel leaves, had, at once, noted and concealed their true hearts’ mystery. Henry held the candle close to examine—“Alas! they are almost worn out! See brother—see my good old Dennison, the initials are divided—the H is faintly shadowed. Look, it hangs only by a few trem-

bling threads—even like the hope—the life—of him whom it represents—and the once enwreathed C, is gone for ever! Behold! not a trace remains. And why, poor Fitz, wert thou brought hither? Surely, thou wouldest have been a solace—even a dear companion of thy cloystered mistress.”—“ Alas! for that very reason,” said Dennison, “ was he resigned! He too much reminded her of the world—she had made it her duty to forget; and she knew he would here both live and die in peace.” Henry was too much affected by the motive of sending the dog out of the convent to attend to any thing more on that subject; but another drew all his attention. Dennison had disappeared at the end of his last speech, but returned in a few minutes bringing under his arm a small box, on which were written the words—‘ *Things precious.*’ “ This, my good and dear masters, contains what I would it were possible to return to her who has deposited them; but should the great and good director of all determine otherwise, they are to be disposed of according to my lady
Caroline’s

Caroline's written requests within." Henry eagerly, yet fearfully opened the lid—and as well as agitation, too big for words, would permit, he inspected the contents; some of which—for all, were separate and appropriated—were directed to her brother, amongst these were the miniature gifts of her mother, mentioned in a former part of this history, and some other reliques of her family. Some were addressed to Mrs. Herbert, some to Johanna—some to Olivia, others to Arthur, to be disposed of for the use of her pensioners, a small packet to each of the apothecary's family; her watch to Jane Atwood—To John Fitzorton an emblematical design of her own painting, representing the Angel of Forgiveness receiving from the Angel of Penitence a scroll, on which the words—'Pardon and Friendship' were curiously tinted, and underneath the illustration of two figures with hands joined, representing their two fathers. At the bottom of the box was found a packet superscribed—"Henry's." He had begun to fear that, amongst these solemn arrangements,

ments, he should find no memorial for himself; and though it is but a melancholy evidence of good will to receive on such occasions, the heart feels an aggravation of its woe to be left without its tribute. He opened it in haste, and perceived very striking resemblances of Olivia and both his children cut out with scissars, from a remembrance, and a strong impression of their features—a few lines were written in the envelope, which covered this little gift.—

“ May the best of men live long to bless the best of women, and of wives ! the loveliest of children !—the noblest of brothers !—such shall unceasingly be the prayer of the heaven-devoted Caroline Stuart !” “ But, I fear, I have done what I ought not,” said Dennison—“ these were not to be forwarded to any of the parties concerned till after to-morrow :”—“ To-morrow !” cried Henry,—“ when my lady Caroline had passed her vow,” resumed Dennison,—“ then, too, I was to have sent to my dear master, the lieutenant, his sister’s last will and testament, wherein

wherein she has done all things worthy of her; and though she has appointed her brother to see her general loving kindness fulfilled, she has named squire Henry, and madam Olivia, to distribute her bounty to her pensioners; and, as I cannot expect, indeed, as I do not wish," said the veteran, "to live long in the world after she has bid it farewell, if that should be God's good pleasure, I mean that my little *modicums* should go in the same channel, please your honours—yet I wish I had not mentioned these things now, as I see it has distressed us, though I thought, while his reverence was gone to know our fate, it might make us less sorrowful to observe how my lady, whom we all know and love, has ordered every thing for her friends in the world, even as if her convent was her coffin, and, to be sure, it is pretty much the same sort of matter." It is certain, Dennison could not have related a more unlikely set of occurrences to exhilarate the spirits of his drooping friends, as, indeed, the tremblings which seized his own aged limbs, and the tears which fell from his old eyes, might testify,

c c 6

tify, yet he meant it all in love. "There's not a doubt remaining," said Henry, "all is over!—these are proofs." "And if they be, we must learn to resign," answered John Fitzorton. "We must not be unworthy the example of a tender, solitary, self-sustaining young woman—arouse, my brother: let us again examine, and with the minds of men and of christians, the arguments of her whom we thus mourn after and arraign. Her own explanations of herself have not even yet been duly attended to. We received them in the hour of confusion, and read them in that of terror and despair." The colonel, conceiving the perusal of Caroline's letter might now produce a good effect on them all, read it aloud, holding his dejected brother by the hand. It was addressed to—

CHARLES STUART, Esq.

Guise Abbey.

"Ah! dearest and sole remaining hope of an ill-fated yet retrievable house, read with a patient mind these sacred pages now submitted

ted to thy discretion and virtue. Our father—I trust in the merciful!—happy in heaven—re-united to our long-fainted mother—our friends honourably blessed on earth—my brother not destitute, and with the prospect of being united to virtue and love like his own, re-united, also, in sacred friendship with the elected companion of his youthful days, and with the patron of his fortunes—the highly valued Henry and John Fitzorton, and the noble Olivia, whom they conspire to bless and honour; there seems but one path open to Caroline, and that she has ventured to take. I have even to the good and holy Arthur only signified my intentions, and called on him to give me, not advice, but assistance: that assistance, which to have refused, would have rendered him unworthy any longer to be my spiritual guide, and have compelled me to seek another. My designs were formed in silent thought, and eloquence or remonstrance would have alike been vain, had he attempted to use them as weapons against my resolves. I hope ere you receive this, I shall have provided for every claim and
duty

duty that remains to me in society, perhaps more substantially, than if I had continued to live in its bosom; for I shall confide in the agency of those who have more strength, more wisdom, and firmer health than myself.—Alas! I am, in many things, weak!—strong only in the love I bear my friends, and, therefore, resolved to avoid acting towards them as if I were an enemy.

“ According to the ceremonies of our faith I have entered these walls—and finding many reasons to be satisfied with my election, and not one to counterpoise it,—my purpose is to cover myself meekly with the eternal veil, *before* the time of your receiving these informations. It is the only point on which I can separate myself from a tenderly-loved brother's claims: the sole principle of action in which I feel myself without responsibility to any *human* power.

“ The withdrawing myself from the asylum which the purest benevolence so long afforded me, every circumstance attaching to which I loved, could only be excused by the fear that my own weak state, yet
strong

strong feeling of gratitude, might dispossess me of the power to resist arguments of kindness, and by that resistance seem to adhere obstinately to my own purpose, or, by yielding, become even of my gratitude the sacrifice. Express this, I pray you, with more force, and with all the sensibility I feel on that subject, to all our noble benefactors.

“ My brother and my friend—farewell.

“ CAROLINE STUART.”

“ For the reasons assigned above,

“ Sanctioned by FATHER ARTHUR.”

This letter was regarded by every one as a sort of funeral oration drawn up immediately before the decease of the orator, and there was but one sentiment about it, — viz. that Caroline Stuart was irrevocably devoted.

CHAPTER LVIII.

MEANTIME the good father Arthur joined fervently in the midnight prayers of the convent, fitting his soul for every pious work. He supplicated for that power of impartial judgment, and of equal ministration, that, while it removes the mists of sense, and elevates the spirit beyond the seduction of mortal things, extinguishes not the principle of humanity, which even in the bosom of holiness, reminds us we are men: and after remaining in the chapel till the nuns and sisters were gone, each to her humble chamber, he repaired to the confessional.

Caroline was already there kneeling before figures of the Virgin, and of her immortal Son. Her countenance was marked by awe, mingled with serenity. She appeared to have subdued those heavy conflicts of the soul, which usually precede the solemn act of renouncing the world, while we are conscious there remains in it many objects precious to the

the human affections; even her health appeared to have regained some force, from the strength of her mind, which had been for so long a time cultivating habits, and imitating examples, of acquiescence and tranquillity.—The sacred images of the great prototype of all meekness, and the purest patron of all resignation—"the man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief,"—were perpetually placed in her view. She saw, in every compartment of the convent, his hallowed figure, exhibiting at once mildness and resolution, the spear goring his side, the thorns platted round his brow, and the nails piercing his feet. By this example of perfect obedience, she had been modelling her own—and, even as the holy father entered, she was reciting aloud, while her eye fixed on the shadowed form of Him, whose unspotted hands, though fastened to the cross, had been incessantly stretched out to dispense blessings, and whose assiduous feet, though rivetted to the tree, always went about doing good.

"Come then, my soul, devote thyself to that dying Saviour! cover thyself under the wings

wings of his redeeming love ! Take sanctuary under that tree of life, and fly for safety to that city of refuge, opened in his wounds !—employ the wakeful night, even as he employed it, in ardent prayer for the happiness of all the good, and pardon of all who have felt their error ! O, arm me with thy fortitude as with thy benevolence, that when the sun shall be arrested in his career, the solid structure of the earth dashed to pieces, and the heavens themselves be rent asunder !—the fates of all mankind hanging on the very point of an irreversibile decision, I may behold the convulsions of expiring nature with composure, and rejoicing with myriads more—and, ah ! may all whom I have ever loved or pitied be amongst these—welcome the consummation of all things !”

She rose to receive Arthur, when she had closed her meditation. “ My dear, my virtuous, my ever, ever-beloved child,” said the sacred man—“ the great and decisive moment of your existence is at hand : I will not ask if you are fitted to meet it, for your life has been one of voluntary discipline, and
earnest

earnest preparation." "I hope it has, and I look forward to the ceremony which is this morning to take place, with a complacency that augments as that hour comes nearer." The father began to confess her, and finding in all her responses and avowals, as to the ordinary questions, he began to fulfil the promise he had made to the friends he had left at the priory. "All this is well," observed Arthur, "but tell me, daughter, if the motives, laudable as they were, which led thee to the refuge of these sheltering walls, were removed"—"Ought my sacred friend," interrupted Caroline, "to propose a question which revives such themes, at such a moment? father, my motives remain, and the resolves formed upon them are, even like them, immovable."

"But if," proceeded Arthur, "they were all removed, by him to whom the steadfast mountain is as the bending shrub that trembles at its base—if that power by whom the fabric of the universe changes its place, or dissolves to the touch—if he should have prepared for my daughter, that peace
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in the world, which she has sought in leaving it"——

The confessor paused, but the confessed was silent.

"If," resumed the former, "one of those beings, in guard of whose felicity thou art become a sister of this sanctuary, should long since have ascended to heaven, yet used the latest moments of her happy life"—

"Olivia dead!" ejaculated Caroline.

"To express," continued Arthur, "that circumstances would allow her children to find a second mother in her friend"—

"O, they will find her in many friends!" cried Caroline.—"And that friend was described to be Caroline Stuart," observed the father—"how then would she determine?"

"According to the principles of her own unshaken faith, which never would interrupt those of the protestant father of protestant children. I bow, weeping, to the Providence that has disposed of Olivia Fitz-orton, but my motives, good father, extended to the religion of all her survivors: spare then, unnecessary discussion, and suffer me to employ

employ the few intermediate hours, in regaining that serenity you have disturbed, that I may render my vows with unmixed satisfaction."

"Be it so, my child, retire to thy place of repose, and of meditation, there examine the great and momentous truths which these papers will convey—there commune with thine own heart—and if on the evidence of those truths, it no longer appears a measure of wisdom or of piety to circumscribe thy powers of conferring happiness, and of doing good, to the narrow bounds of this holy place, thou wilt order its gates to uncloseth, and either meet me at the priory house, where I will abide thy coming, or send to me the summons to attend the ceremony of thy eternal vows."

The blameless father led her out of the confessional into the convent, and feeling that he had no power of assisting her choice, he blessed her, and departed.

CHAPTER LIX.

WHEN father Arthur returned to his friends, he found that none of them had retired to rest, nor even sat down to any refreshment; but that every one was wound up by expectation and solicitude to the highest pitch of those corroding powers: he saluted them with his wonted benignity, but, alas! he was invested with no authority to put an end to their suspense. He offered, however, in relief of it, a faithful detail of what had past in the confessional: with firmness, he gave the feelings of the recluse, and concluded by observing, that he had left in her hands, not only the letter which had been brought by the lieutenant from the colonel, but all the other packets which had been collecting, whether kept back by discretion, or retarded by accident; "in short," said the pious father, "I have delivered to her contemplation all that it was proper for her to know, and concealed only

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what might have unduly influenced her election." As he finished his account, there was still left sufficient to torture and to appease conjecture; solemn silence, invaded only by the sighs of Henry, prevailed throughout the assembly. Arthur threw a beam of sun-shine over the prospect, by observing, that though in no degree receding from her point, she gave her utmost attention to all he had to report, and that while she preserved unwarped the sobriety of her mind, she displayed and made no attempt to repel the sensibility of her heart: and in that just poise of faculty and feeling—the most to be desired, when an awful decision is to be made,—he said, he left her.

For the first time since his entrance into the abbot's house, Henry smiled, as if he caught a passing ray from that far distant, yet cheering hope: the good father ventured to clear the prospect yet more: the generous Dennison whispered Henry, that his honour should consider that first love was not soon forgotten. The kind Floresco, almost imperceptibly approaching the only
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disengaged ear of Henry, Dennison remaining at the other—humbly remarked “that the good God had taken away poor ickle negroman’s dear heart—dear Loraida, and yet good father Arthur had made him tink God is good God still, so ickle negroman only tries to make him’s soul like white christian man’s soul, that him may see hims only love in happy place.”—The lieutenant held one of the hands of his friend, and often pressed it to his bosom. The colonel took the other, from time to time whispering—“Let what will be the issue, remember me!” Thus partly by remonstrance, and partly by hope, though each was slight yet, as the spark if nursed cautiously, and supplied, will afford some warmth, and some light, even if it baffles all care in the end, Henry suffered himself awhile to be comforted; inso-much that Arthur persuaded him to set his friends a social example by sitting down to the humble repast.

The morning hours, however, chased one another away without producing any sort of reply from the devotee; the day had already dawned.

dawned. Every vigilant eye and watchful ear of Arthur's party remained unclosed. Even the good father himself, whose attempered spirit had been long armed against the power of the general invaders of our brief life's tranquillity, was too sincerely interested in the event of Caroline's decision, to court that repose, or indeed, to partake of that refreshment, which health and virtue rarely denied him : and although he had blessed the board, and he regarded as his children all that were assembled, the viands were served, but untasted.

In the meantime, the fair devout was employed in contemplations of the highest import. When she had reached her cell—and never did vestal enter with a purer spirit, and somewhat resumed herself, she sat down by her lamp, not discomposed, nor yet disordered. She opened the papers which Arthur had left with her, not with an unsteady hand, yet not without something of tremor. Pressing her cross, and bending to her crucifix, she rose hastily, and kneeling down, sought support from him who alone can give it.

it. She returned to her seat, and unfolding all the letters without hesitation, took up one at hazard; it happened to be that which John had entrusted to the conveyance of her brother, a perusal of which, indeed, rendered the rest iterative and superfluous. As we trust that it has not left the reader's memory, we shall only note that after having read it thrice, she sat ruminating on the varied wonders it contained.

She resumed once more the same letter, and although generally impressive, one passage was particularly dwelt upon, and when she had paid it more attention than the rest, though, in truth, the point which so much engaged her consisted but of a single word, she imagined her lamp grew unusually dim, but after trimming it, she perceived the obstruction of light came from her own eyes, for one of their tears had fallen upon that very word. Almost, instantly, on her discovery of this, she folded up the letter with a resolved hand, and although she acknowledged in the superscription of the others the well-known characters of her long-lost com-

companions, Mrs. Herbert and Johanna, and one from Charles, her much-loved brother, she wrapt them in the general cover, under which she had received them, and left her cell.

The indecisive anxieties had so accumulated in the minds of the society at the priory, as the broad day came on, that each individual examined the almost hopeless countenance of the others for relief, and found it not. The eighth hour was sounded from the convent, and that it had been understood was the time appointed for the ceremony. Henry rushed out, as he saw some lay sisters passing from one of the streets with small baskets in their hands: Hurrying towards them as they were ringing at the outer gate of the convent, he observed that the baskets were filled with the flowers of the season, to strew the floor of the vestal as she passed to the altar.— He seized one of the baskets, and grasping what it contained in silent but profound despair, threw them again into the basket, which he returned to the astonished sister.—

“ They are to cover then, eternally, the corpse of Caroline,” exclaimed he. The trembling sister took refuge within the half-opened gate, which was closed again in a moment.

Smiting his breast, the forlorn Henry turned again towards the door of the house, and perceived himself surrounded by his sympathizing friends ; but the majestic Arthur exhorted him to respect the decrees of the Omnipotent, whatever they might suggest to the person he bewailed ; observing, that if his passion was virtuous it would not shrink from the trials of virtue ; and if the happiness of Caroline was precious, he would be content to let her pursue it according to the dictate of her own conscience. “ Brother, remember me !” reiterated John. Henry returned into the abbot’s house, and endeavoured to compose himself—strode along the apartment—took up the poor spaniel, which had attempted, in vain, to follow his master’s irregular movements—and then Henry sighing over him, placed him on his lap—

lap—Seeing Dennison weep, he dried his tears—assured him he was perfectly reconciled—and sat himself down, and sobbed with grief. A number of persons passing by the window soon caught his attention; throwing open the window, he perceived them dressed as for the solemnity—and moving towards the convent.—Again, Henry rushed forth, he questioned one of the assembly—they were friends or kindred of the sisters, or nuns, who have permission to see the ceremony of a novitiate, who is to take the vows—and were fearful of being too late. Some of the visitors had gained admittance, while the person interrogated was speaking. Others were hurrying in. Henry ran forward to the gate of the convent, while it was yet receiving the invited guests. The notes of the organ, mingling with the chant of some priests who were just arrived in the cloysters of the convent, struck like thunder on the ear of Henry—he attempted to precipitate himself within the portals, but they had received all who were to pass—and were shut a second time against him. He struggled to the bell,

and rung it—in vain : the moment was passed—His surrounding friends, and the gathering multitude, saved him from dashing himself with desperate rage against the massy nails that projected from the convent gate.—“ Hark ! hark !” said he,—“ the bell tolls ; it is the funeral of the barbarous Caroline Stuart !”

While his friends, who had all followed, were conveying him from the astonished croud, the gate of the convent was again opened by the porterefs, and a monk issuing forth, desired to be conducted to father Arthur ; but soon perceiving him, he advanced towards him, exclaiming with a loud voice—“ Father, your presence is immediately demanded in the convent of the visitation : not a moment may be lost.” Arthur instantly accompanied the monk, and the despairing Henry, who indistinctly heard the summons, was too much over-come even to struggle any longer, and was carried, as if stiffened by death, into the abbot’s house.

CHAPTER LX.

No sooner had father Arthur gained the interior of the convent, than he found the sisters, the nuns, the chief priest, and St. Seraphina, the superior, standing confused, and in disorder, in the chapel: every thing was in preparation for the ceremony: the floor strewn, the carpet on which, according to custom, the newly-consecrated nun was to fall; the neck and head-dress to change from the novitiate white veil to the black, appointed to be worn by the nuns of the order, were ready. The belt and beads were placed on the altar, one of the sisters was tolling the bell, to give warning to the votary, that the holy association were waiting to hear, and to record her vows. As soon as Arthur made his appearance, the principal abbess came forward to inform him that his presence was necessary, to enforce the obedience of the novice, whom he had recommended to her convent, asserting, that

she had come forward with objections when it was too late to admit them, and that she had resisted every holy authority, and repelled every sacred exhortation with a pride and confidence utterly inconsistent with a vestal, and with the meek and unobtrusive demeanour she had observed during her whole novitiate. "She has refused even to make her appearance," said the abbess. As Arthur was about to reply, Caroline herself entered the chapel, and bending with unaffected reverence to the altar, and with due regard to the sanctity of the place, declared "that she felt the most undissembled sorrow that the conduct of one she had so long revered, and whom still she loved and honoured, had rendered it necessary," she said, "to obtrude herself, at such a moment, and in such a presence, on the judgment of the assembly." After this exordium, she informed Arthur, that having perused some of the papers he had left for her meditation, she had repaired, even so early as the fourth hour, to the chamber of Saint Seraphina, whom she found still at her devotions; that
she

she had stated with candour the unexpected motives which made it necessary to close the terms of her conventual life with the moment that closed her novitiate—even the moment in which she was making the declaration—and at the same time informed the superior, that although many of the circumstances which formed these motives, being wholly of a domestic and private nature, were too delicate for discussion, she referred her to father Arthur for her justification, in demanding the privilege of withholding her vows, and of quitting the sisterhood, under his holy protection: humbly expressing a hope that she might leave her embrace and blessing with every respected individual of the community. The preparations were, however, suffered to proceed, the right of election was disputed, and the good and beneficent St. Seraphina, who had been to me,” said Caroline, “till that moment, as a friend and a parent, taxed me with caprice, irreverence and impiety.”

“It was but her grief,” said Arthur, benignly, “her grief to part from you, my

daughter: she felt that she found in your society the endearment of a child, and to be suddenly bereaved of it, even in the hour that she had told her heart you would remain with her for the rest of your life, gave to her zeal, prompted by her affection, an earnestness for which your love and respect must allow—but sister Seraphina can require only a moment's recollection of herself to know that forced vows are unacceptable to the power to whom they are offered—that faith constrained encourages hypocrisy, and that every act that chains the mind is impious: our sister is not to learn besides, that freedom of choice during the year of experiment and probation gives to every votary the power of returning to society, or of remaining secluded; and it has often happened, as in the case before us, that a change of circumstances warrants a change of conduct; all the virtues, it is true, are like God himself, who is their fountain, invariable and eternal; but the same principles which, at one time, conduct a novice to the cloyster may lead her again into the world.

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I am here to vouch, my sister, that many such circumstances have arisen to determine our virtuous daughter to leave this holy mansion: but, in leaving it, she departs not from the blessed power to whom it is dedicated. Sister Seraphina is not amongst those misguided zealots of our persuasion, or of any other, who believe that the omnipresent deity can be served only within the pale of their own convents, or in that of the catholic or protestant church. Happier if every worshipper has access to his proper temple; but true religion, my sister knows, like the sublime spirit that inspires it, is not to be circumscribed: the veritable God is to be found, and a temple may be raised to him, in every part of his universe. Let us not narrow his sacred presence, even to that bound, since, passing the limit of our contracted globe, insufficient, alas! to fill even our finite idea of the unmeasured authority and government of his power, his benevolence, and his wisdom, he spreads himself over other worlds as incalculable in number, as impartial in the diffusion of his holy spirit:

and doubtless, in every part of these regions, the votary may, with equal sincerity, and with equal certainty of being heard, erect his altar and offer up his prayer. — This, our daughter,” added Arthur, after a short pause, “ I pledge myself, can always be happy in the assurance that she is every where in the guard, and under the sacred eye of her Creator. She has raised to his glory a shrine in her heart, and were she shut out from every other sanctuary, and bereft of the sight of all those holy emblems, figures, and ceremonies, which we humbly trust are symbols as innocent as we find them impressive—although, God forbid! we should impose them as fetters on our brethren, who have rejected them!—were, I say, the good daughter who is separating herself from this community, to be separated for ever from the view, also, of these ;—be assured, O sister in the faith, she would still be conscious of being in the presence of the majesty of heaven, even as she is at this moment, and her adoration would be every where the same.”

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The surrounding assembly were much awed, and such as were too bigotted or prejudiced to yield to the matter, were affected by the manner of his harangue. The abbess for some moments remained silent, then going up to Caroline, took her by the hand, and led her to the venerable Franciscan. "Brother," said she, "in resigning this child to your disposal, I give up one of the purest treasures of my heart: a treasure, which if I have attempted to preserve, it is because I could not but deem it too precious to be exposed again to the perils of the world; haply my self-love may have, alas! mixed with this motive, for she has taught me to feel that a mother's tenderness may fill the heart of the patroness of a cloyster,—even as these human, and I hope, forgiven tears have filled her eyes."

Touched to the recesses of her gentle bosom, Caroline folded her arms in the robes of St. Seraphina, as she bent her knee even to the ground; and then moving to the altar, on which were laid the several emblems of vestal consecration, she prostrated herself before the crucifix, and taking up
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the pall which was symbolically to have been thrown over her while she was renouncing the world, "O! till an eternal veil like this," exclaimed she, "shall cover my frame, every holy precept I owe to this pious community shall form the practice of my life:—and these, thou honoured preceptor!—and ye, my beloved sisterhood! shall be joined in every prayer, and mingle in every hope of our everlasting reunion! Such are my substituted vows:—Accept them, thou who hast called me hence, in place of those which my soul was prepared to offer!" The abbess raised and embraced her; the nuns received her from the superior; the prayers appointed for her eternal seclusion, were now converted into spontaneous and fervent aspirations for her happiness in the world; every knee was bent; every head was bowed; at length, the abbess again made a solemn surrender of her charge to father Arthur, and Caroline Stuart quitted the convent, followed even to the outer gate by the whole sisterhood; some of whom had gathered up the flowers which
had

had been spread over the carpet, to strew them in the path that again led her into the world. But when she had passed the gate and saw it closing on the attendant train, who for twelve long months had been unto her indeed as sisters, and to whom she had been a pure example of resignation and piety, she cast on them a parting look which the pure affections of virtuous minds can alone give or receive.

CHAPTER LXI.

ARTHUR had deemed it one of the fair and necessary reserves he had conditioned for, to conceal from Caroline every circumstance which might bias her decision, or practise on her heart; consequently she had as yet no idea that either her brother or any of her friends were so near at hand; and conscious as he was of the afflicting, but inevitable state in which he had left those, he was anxious to prevent any abrupt discovery of the important issue of his return to the convent. She was still in her novitiate

ate dress, but as Arthur led her by the priory door, he had opportunity to convey his charge into an interior apartment, of which he always kept the keys; beyond which was a small book-room sacred to his own contemplations, and thither he now resorted with Caroline.

Seating himself beside her, and in the most affectionate manner addressing her, he briefly but cautiously acquainted her with the several things he had judged it proper to conceal, and when he had carried his conversation through the several circumstances that related to her brother's journey and voyage of fraternal affection, and the nature and import of his embassy from the castle, of the pious death of Olivia, and her last message of love mingled with wishes respecting the disposal of her husband and children, he was proceeding to bring down the intelligence nearer to the moment before them, when Caroline interposing, observed, that she found all he had been relating, mentioned at length, and with many additional circumstances in the packets with which he had presented her; confessing

confessing to him that on the strong opposition of the superior, and the urgency of several of the sisters, that she should suffer the solemnities of the day to proceed, arguing, amidst sighs and tears, that it was an offence to heaven to stop them; she had gone back to her cell, and in the profoundest solitude not only read the letter, which had before thrice passed her eye, and which till then seemed all-commanding as to the steps she ought to take, but that she perused and re-perused every other paper, to the intent, seriously and sacredly of confessing the error of her decision, and blending such confession in her vows, or of being farther convinced her determination to withhold those vows, was sanctioned by every duty upon earth. "But," said Caroline,—
"strengthened by all I read, by all I thought, in the belief that I had decided justly, I hope it deserves a fairer name than the self-willed tenacity which had been imputed to me,—if my resolve then took a form of resistance which would not have given way to either argument or supplication. I was returning

to the sisterhood to repeat my intentions with renovated force, when I saw with the comfort which always attends me in his presence, the friend and guide of my life. You know the rest."

"Then you are sufficiently prepared to hear that the lieutenant, though he did not give you those letters, was the bearer of them; that he traced us from our recess in the happy isle, to our sanctuary here; and that finally, he is in this very house, attended by your humble, but ever faithful friend, True George."

Although the reader has reason to know that, yet, with the name of True George, associated another name so very powerful, at this singular moment, that she could not help asking whether she had distinctly heard what he said as to her brother's fellow-traveller? "Yes, True George came over with him," replied Arthur, "and some others."—"Others!" said Caroline; "Yes, our protector the colonel soon followed him."—"John Fitzorton!" exclaimed Caroline, dwelling emphatically on the word—John!
"how

“how generous, how good, how like himself! I hope,” said she, hesitating, “he left all his friends, all his family well:—as well, alas! as they can be!” Rightly suggesting that a managed discovery of the grand decision might be no less necessary to Henry than to Caroline, the monk hastened to the room where the castle party had been assembled. He encountered Floresco in his way up stairs. “Masser a-bed,” exclaimed the youth, fearfully. The monk ascended, and saw his friends surrounding a bed on which they had laid the despairing Henry, who had manifested symptoms which made them for some time apprehend the loss of his senses; but he soon became more composed, and was speaking coherently, when Arthur entered.—“Fear not, my friends,” said he, “I perceive a path yet left to save me,—one which none of you can blame.” He lay some time revolving this new image in his mind, or rather recurring to a preconceived design, now to be matured. His tranquillity returned in proportion as he made progress in his purposed plan. At length, with resolution, he rose from the bed

bed, and walked backwards and forwards in the room, from time to time assuring his friends he was regaining his peace. "I am settling my mind," said he, with disordered accents; he alternately took the hands of his brother and his friend Charles; as he passed to and fro, his countenance became more and more serene, yet tears fell from his eyes, and he sighed as he lay down again on the bed. But, at length, recognizing Arthur, he again rose impetuously. "It is unnecessary to make any report of the event," exclaimed he,—
"I will spare you the particulars. Caroline Stuart has devoted herself—yes, your delay—your silence—all which I have seen—heard—felt—pronounce my doom. Attend therefore to my solemn determinations; nay, interrupt me not,—speak not, I implore you, till I have done. I shall want your assistance, but it is nothing in which your pure spirit may not engage; and it is the only point that remains to restore my happiness,—to reconcile my soul,—hear then,—I conjure you, to hear me!"—"I will," answered the worthy priest with energy, as if anticipating Henry's ideas;

ideas ; “ but, perhaps, it should be heard with less hazard of interruption.”

The party would have left the room—
“ No,” cried the monk, “ your presence may be requisite, but as we shall be less disturbed in one of the lower apartments, I would advise if my son feels himself strong enough”—“ Strong enough for every thing,” answered Henry, wildly—“ behold I can walk unsupported.” “ This way then my son, and the rest of our friends will follow.” They now descended into the gothick apartment fronting the street, where they had before assembled.

“ I have a presentiment of what revolves in your mind, my son,” continued the friar, “ and will return in a few moments prepared to give you audience.” While Arthur absented himself, Henry’s whole soul seemed to be employed.

The Franciscan meanwhile returned to Caroline, and found her again perusing the packets, and some of that colour which paints the human affections, but which an habitual repression of those affections, and a
life

life severe to itself, expels gradually, even from the heart, had returned into her cheek.

Arthur judged this to be the moment in which more animating tidings might be safely communicated—he extended the pleasing news, by informing her that he could now promise her an interview with her brother, and the humble George, as well as with her friend, John Fitzorton, whenever she was prepared to admit them. “What preparation can be necessary, my good father? I entreat of you to let me this moment attend them—I have observed in you an apparent wish to procrastinate, that alarms me:—You replied not to my former apprehension as to the health of others of our friends. Neither have I been quite candid: Wherefore should I deal, my good father, with you reservedly—the motives, cogent and manifold, which have drawn me from the cloyster ought to be, and are, sufficient to justify all the movements of my heart—wherefore then have I so long forborne a more direct enquiry after Henry Fitzorton? I entreat of you to satisfy my solicitude about his health—but, perhaps,
you

you wish the tidings to come to me from his brother or from the colonel?" "I wish it, my dearest child, to come in a manner the most acceptable, and to that end only have I procrastinated. Henry Fitzorton accompanied the colonel, he too is in the abbot's house—his health, perhaps his reason, and his life, depend upon his happiness—his happiness is, I trust, not remote: he is very near us. I will place you where you shall hear what I have told you confirmed; but whatever you may observe I call on that obedience which has, invariably, distinguished the conduct of my dearest daughter, to retain her station, unheard, unseen, till I give the signal, and that signal I pledge myself shall not be delayed beyond the moment even of her own attested satisfaction." The father re-conducted her from the little book-room to the apartment which joined it, and which was divided from the front parlour where Henry and his friends were assembled, only by a slight partition, from whence there was a door of communication, and the half of that door was of glass shaded to the extent of

of

of the glazing by a curtain that run upon rings. "Be this your point of unobserved observation," whispered the monk, to the agitated Caroline, as he drew a chair immediately beside the curtain. He then went back into the parlour.

Henry had been working up his several faculties to the bent of his resolve, and he imagined them to be all in so firm a state, that advancing to Arthur on his entrance, he declared aloud his steadfast purpose. "Now then, friend, and holy father, I call upon you in your professional office for that aid which it would be derogatory to your character to refuse me. In the first place, I bequeath the education of my dear children to those I love best in the world—save one who has this cruel morn precipitated herself out of that world—my duty to their angel mother, at whatever price, has been fulfilled—my bosom friend has by a new election regained the path of happiness—my dear brothers I feel assured will remain to sustain the honour of my family, to comfort our poor, and become joint guardians of my little ones—I resolve then

to follow the example of Caroline Stuart so far as to dedicate the rest of my days to monastic sequestration; and as the faith I have adopted takes no change from the colour of my deep disappointments, but will, I trust, in time, enable me to support and survive them—to surmount them is beyond my hope, beyond even my wish,—I determine to join myself to the fraternity of which you, my reverend father, are a member, even to the holy brotherhood of St. Francis. I am not to learn that a neighbouring monastery, even in Coutance, is sacred to that thrice-blessed saint; and it will soothe me to be near my Caroline, although the eternal walls, even when heaven itself which had set us free, shall then again throw over us inextricable chains. Seek not, O my brother and my friends, to oppose me in this immovable resolve—place not as obstacles before its execution the dear, dear objects of my paternal love—objects which are even new incentives to prosecute my design—were I destitute of John and James Fitzorton I might struggle still in the weary pilgrimage of the world,

but to them I can confide my treasures, and, alas! I feel that neither by precept nor example, could their ill-fated parent any longer assist their youth; and the affection of their uncles shall soon oblivate all memory of their unhappy father."

Perceiving the colonel had been throwing over the whole of this proposition the most formidable frown, and that he was coming forward with arguments which would destroy his project, "Brother," continued the conscious Henry, "I see that you disapprove my plan, and that other of my friends deplore it, but in this one point behold me inexorable. Receive, then, as solemn pledges of my confidence in you, the son and daughter of a man resolved to quit the world—you cannot, dare not, refuse me. Guard for them my fortunes. Everlastingly shall they and their protectors, and all present, and all absent, who have a claim on my heart, be included in my prayers!" An audible and exclamatory sigh broke from the opposite room: such of the company as heard it looked somewhat startled on each other. Henry had
paused,

paused, and risen from his seat as if uncertain of the sound, but not again hearing it, he addressed himself more immediately to Arthur. "And now father," said he, "having witnessed my immovable resolution to devote the rest of my days to a seclusion, not less absolute than that of Caroline Stuart, who alone could have made the world delightful to me—now that she, for whom so many years of my life have been past in faithful sorrow—now that she has removed herself for ever—I call upon you to grant sanctuary to a breaking heart—to afford it a place of refuge. Voluntary has been the profession of my faith: voluntary shall be the offering of myself up to the church which cherishes it. O haste me, father, that I may be received into its bosom: and confirm, even now before this assembly of my friends, my holy election."

"I consent," replied Arthur, who had in vain attempted to speak, "I consent that Henry Fitzorton, in consideration of his sufferings, and his constancy for Caroline Stuart, and of his many and hard trials in the years

of his youth, even unto this day, shall follow her example."

The company were amazed. John was risen to protest against the measure.

"I consent," reiterated the Franciscan, "and will give my assistance to the rendering his resolve not less absolute than hers, and in despite of all opposition I here pledge myself, even before the altar, which in the adjoining chapel of the priory has often received my bending knee, and before the sacred figures that surround the shrine, and every other witness who is here present, or within hearing of my voice—yes, by all these, I pledge myself to hear, and to record the vows of Henry, even as I have heard, and recorded those of Caroline."

"It may not be," asserted John; "my brother has duties in the world—the duties of a father, which during that father's life no substitute can——"

"Those duties shall not suffer by the vows I am determined to sanction," rejoined the monk. "Proceed we to the altar: this key will open the door which leads to the chapel."

"I pro-

"I protest against the deed," answered John: "I will not pronounce on the conduct of Caroline, but in my brother a similar act would be impious."

"And I too wholly disapprove it in my sister," exclaimed the lieutenant: "Are the children of Olivia to be thus neglected?—are they to be basely deserted by their father?" cried John in awful whispers—"O! fainted spirit of the tenderest mother! are thy little ones to become orphans?"

Henry stood irresolute—Dennison and Floresco wept and prayed—The apothecary began to plead—True George had been in balance, whether he should pursue the long-trodden steps of his beloved master, or retrace the paths that led to his plighted mistress.

Meantime the key had done its office—and the monk, firm in his purpose, had caught one of Henry's hands: John forcibly seized the other, and began to drag it in an opposite direction—"And is the far-famed father Arthur, like the meanest bigot of his tribe, a man who trades in

conversion—an imposer of his faith on the misguided?—I am now justified in believing my brother has been proselyted in another point—”

“ Son,” answered the monk, “ when a proof of your charge appears, I will acknowledge its force; till then no earthly power—not your’s—whom most on earth I venerate—shall impede my progress.”

“ Father aid me to pour forth my unshaken intents before the shrine you speak of, as a solemn earnest of my future consecration; and I shall then feel myself beyond the reach of this unfair controul. I am resolved.”

John, with strong indignation, flung back his brother’s hand, and Arthur threw open the folding doors, from which Caroline Stuart, in the almost insupportable agitation of her feelings and of her frame, had, however, receded. The whole company followed the monk and Henry into the apartment, trembling at every step. John came after them, with movements that marked his deeply-disturbed mind.

“ The chapel is at the end of these
small

small apartments," said Arthur. He led Henry along, still followed by the rest. They, at length, entered the chapel of the priory: the altar was placed between two broad columns, on each of which were painted, at full length, two sacred figures, the one of the blessed virgin, the other of the redeemer of the world. Henry fell on his knees the instant he came within view of the shrine. Arthur looked around with surprise, but as he was preparing to speak, a part of Caroline's sacred vestment relieved him, and approaching the altar and kneeling also, he exclaimed, "Now, may the vows of my pious son be no less acceptable to heaven than those of my virtuous daughter!"

Instantly from behind that column, which represented the virgin, proceeded another sigh, so penetrating, so audible, that Henry again started up, and stood fixed. "Blest, yet overwhelming moment!" cried a voice. Henry ran forward, and, in the succeeding moment, she, from whom the melodious

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sounds

sounds issued, sprung to fight, and Caroline Stuart stood confessed.

Unable to support her various sensations, on hearing the key turning within the lock, and, as the hand of the reverend Arthur was pressing against the door, she had started from her seat, which, as the expressions she had heard governed her movements, she had alternately left and revisited.—Unconscious of motion, she had continued her retreat from the one apartment to the other: she gained the sacred column, and with difficulty supported herself behind it, overcome with excess of pure felicity.

Astonishment and joy fixed the whole assembly, save Arthur, in the same statue-like positions. It seemed as if the wand of an enchanter, even with the force of an electric communication, had in that instant completed its spell: and, indeed, it was magic of the highest kind, and from the most potent hand,—a touch ethereal that chained them for some minutes to their attitudes.

At

At length Henry called for the aid of John; and the lieutenant ran to assist the failing steps of his sister Caroline. But never had there yet been a period, in the life of either, so interesting, so insupportable, as that in which Caroline Stuart and Henry Fitzorton were conducted, by their brothers, into the arms of each other!—Truth, constancy, approved love, smiling pity, consenting virtue, and rewarding piety, mingled in that embrace!—In one moment the bruised reed was made whole, and the almost quenched flax, purged of all its vapour, kindled into a flame, which burnt pure for ever.

“O! heaven of heavens!” exclaimed Henry, “and thou its purest pattern upon earth, inspire me with gratitude equal to my transport—and with fortitude to endure it!” “There, there, my children!” said the exulting Arthur, pointing to the altar, “must you invoke the inspiring power.” “Yes, he is the source!” cried Caroline, pressing her rosary with one hand,
E E 5 and

and with the other leading Henry forward, then kneeling down with all humility, but with returning force, as if bestowed from above:—"HE IS THE SOURCE!" repeated she, "from whence every evil has been averted, or sustained—and from whence every good has been derived." "Blessed and adored be that source for ever!" exclaimed the monk, crossing his hands upon his bosom, as he prostrated himself, and bowing before the shrine with the most profound reverence; the auditors did the same, repeating his words: "It is in this sacred place then—in this sacred attitude, that the substituted vows of Caroline shall be heard and sanctified," exclaimed the monk. Then Arthur laid his hand on their heads, breathing over each of them a prayer, which was not without a power derived from the source he supplicated. In that moment John Fitzorton, and Charles Stuart, who had placed themselves on each side of the chief objects of the benediction, rose up—advanced yet nearer the altar,
and

and joined the hands of Caroline and Henry; blessing both and uniting them for ever.

But in the good old Dennison, the youthful Floresco, and the worthy apothecary, it was an event that annihilated all words in sensation, even as it had operated in the blissful silence of the lovers. In True George its effects were accompanied by emotions so strong, that had they not found mitigation in a shower of tears, which came to his relief as the brothers pronounced the blessing, he might have fallen a martyr to genuine, but insupportable joy.

By the friendship which subsisted between the bishop of Cherbourg, and the pious father Arthur, the customary term of residence was shortened, and the marriage solemnized, with all the forms of the catholic religion.

CHAPTER LXII.

ON returning from the church, where the ceremony was performed, Partington, with Mrs. Herbert, and Johanna, who had been apprized of all the circumstances, by letters from the lieutenant, arrived in time to receive the bride and bridegroom at the door of the abbot's house, and a meeting of more genuine satisfaction can never have been witnessed in the annals of mankind. But in happiness, as in grief, the additional drops which may be poured into the cup when we suppose it incapable of holding more, fully prove how incompetent mortals are to decide upon the power of human minds; or to measure the proportions they may be called upon, either to enjoy or to endure.

A conference with father Arthur had excited in the bishop of Coutance, his ancient friend, so warm an interest in the happiness and future fortune of Henry and
Caroline,

Caroline, that to testify his respect for their sufferings and their rewards, he expressed an earnest desire to receive them at his palace, accompanied by the rest of their party. The prelate's wishes were conveyed by the monk, whose virtues have so much enriched this history, and the happy, yet grateful Henry, not knowing how far a visit to a catholic bishop might be agreeable to the protestant part of his company, nor presuming to make his own conversion a rule of faith to others, looked to his brother for a reply. "I trust," said John, kindly answering to Henry's look, "we can have but one opinion as to the invitation of a venerable man, who seeks to increase the accumulating honours of that virtue, which has been tried and found faithful—a man who is also the friend of father Arthur: whom, indeed," added the colonel, "my unjust suspicion has again so wronged, that I can hardly deem myself a fit associate; and should feel that I ought to banish myself from being of the party, did I not know, that I should thereby

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rob so revered, though so outraged, a friend of half the pleasures of a forgiving spirit." John bowed with true humility, and blushed with generous consciousness. "My son! my benefactor!" answered Arthur, "your conjectures were highly coloured by circumstance, and your resistance to apparently undue authority exercised on the will of your brother, in two the most important concerns of his life—his affection, and his faith—was even a fraternal duty. With the last awful concern I have nothing to do: with the former I should not, perhaps, have so long delayed stating the ground on which I stood. I should have removed your apprehensions as to the nature of your brother's vows, and without equivocation have told you, that in imitating those which his Caroline had formed, he would act under your own sanction, of which a written proof had been so recently received from you."

• For modes of faith let zealous bigots fight,
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

Thus

Thus quoted Henry. "I think I have often heard you say, you fine old caitiff," cried Partington, addressing himself to Arthur, "that this scoundrel of a bishop, is much such another fellow as yourself. Let us go to his palace in a body, and send somebody to bid him expect our whole gang."

The invitation was accepted. And in order to render the homage to real virtue, which had passed the ordeal, more distinguished, the prelate had added to the party many of his own particular friends, yet had not the visit been marked by something of yet greater import, to the honour and happiness of the Fitzortons, it would have had no record in these pages.

After a repast which hospitality had prepared, and temperance had blest, the prelate invited his guests to a walk in the gardens of his palace; the scenery was of high natural beauty, and cultured with exquisite taste; several persons were employed in watering the flowers—but they were as yet at a considerable distance, and their features indistinct. As the party drew somewhat nearer, they
heard

heard the persons at work singing.—“ Yes,” said the good bishop to Henry and Caroline, who happened to be the nearest to him, “ that is their usual way of sweetening business with pleasure.”—“ Which shews their labours to be light,” interposed Henry. “ I hope so,” said the prelate, “ but there is an exception to this general rule of happy industry, among my peasants. One of them, and dearer to me than the rest, has never been known to raise her voice to songs of vivacity ; although her notes of sadness might vie with those which grace the woes of sorrow’s bird. Yet she toils—I wish her not to toil—more assiduously, and with more content than any of the rest : but, alas ! she too often waters the plants with her tears, and I know not why.” “ And a female !” said Caroline, drawing the back of her hand across her own eyes. “ And, I fear, an unhappy one,” answered the bishop. “ She came recommended to me by a brother, who is no more. Some mystery, however, involves her. It is about a year and half ago, that she was bequeathed to my care. Her
mind

mind seems to require employment, and I, therefore, have suffered her to busy herself amongst the flowers. I wished it, indeed, to be amusement; she makes it labour. In all things she has diligence and taste: yet she has capacities for higher culture: a sense—a natural sense and sensibility too, of virtue and of religion. I suspect she has lost a relation, or, perhaps, mourns my brother, who was a prototype of benevolence—or she laments, perchance, her absence from her country. She is continually heaping the flower beds into hillocks, like graves, and then covers them with the flowers new set. But she has now made some progress towards clear perceptions of life and death, and holiness and truth; yet her melancholy, though softened, is not dispelled. She has of late been touched by the example of the nuns, and wishes for a conventual life. She is no way gloomy, or sullen; but I have never been able to trace a smile on her countenance; and, if her grief continues, I have thoughts of indulging her as a novitiate in the convent of which my friend St. Seraphina is the superior.

superior. That is the young woman now bending over the farther bed of roses, and tying some of them up." "Alas! she wants support herself—her spirits are sunk to the earth," sighed Caroline. "She is not of Europe, you will perceive. But I cannot discover her mystery," said the bishop.

While he was giving these additional traits, and the company advanced nearer the object, a loud and piercing shriek burst from Arthur's Indian, and another scream from the female labourer, so loud and piercing it rent the air. In the next moment, the names of Floresco and Zoraida were reverberated from the one to the other, with every mark of wild and ungovernable joy. They embraced—they prostrated themselves on the earth—they lifted up their hands towards heaven—they kissed the feet of the spectators—kneeled down with humility—sprung up in extacy—and again embraced.—It was, indeed, Zoraida, the innocent idol and never-fading image of Floresco's heart.

"My brother," said the prelate, "returning from the western plantations, where he

he had amassed a considerable fortune, had brought over three natives of the country in his suite, two of these died upon the passage, with many others of the sable race belonging to the captain himself, an epidemy raging in the vessel from the heat of the weather, and the cruel method of crowding so many human beings together in so narrow a space. My poor brother himself lived only a few hours after his arrival; he yielded up his breath even before I could see him; his corpse, with the rest of his property, and this Indian girl, were conveyed to Coutance, and when I could acquire fortitude to attend to common affairs, I found amongst the papers of the deceased the following note addressed to myself:—‘Faithful to me in servitude, attentive to me in sickness, even to the expiring hour at which I write this, receive amongst my best possessions the bearer hereof, the orphan Zoraida.’

“I can add little to this account, except that the most docile and gentle manners, and a something of sadness, which her want of our language prevents her yet from explaining, had

had given me a sincere interest to see her more happy." "They will explain themselves," exclaimed Arthur, "see they are already telling to each other their short but faithful history! Gracious Providence! how alike in their fates, their fortunes, and their feelings!—alike be their felicity! Leave them, I pray you, good my lord, a little to themselves—they are of the same country, the same village, the same affection, and I am even more interested for them than yourself." "We are all interested," interposed the rest of the party, "and if Zoraida be as valuable as Floresco," said the lieutenant to the bishop, "your brother has bequeathed to you a treasure indeed." Father Arthur then recited the brief story of his fable *protegee*, which was so exact a counterpart of the good prelate's adopted, that although the different friends of the abbey and castle, were thus drawn for a while out of themselves, and they could hear only a repetition of a well-known tale, the new interest which the discovery had created, made them listen to every circumstance with the eagerness of affection.

Although

Although Arthur had moved with his friends only a few paces, the fable lovers appeared to have no consciousness of any thing but of themselves. In the language of the heart, however, they had been abundant, pouring forth and exchanging that way every image and sentiment of bliss and rapture, with an ardour that caught the view not only of the bishop and his guests, but of the peasants who had gathered near; at length Floresco drew from a pocket-book, with which True George had presented him, the work of Jane Atwood's own hands—not only the remains of his beloved's letter with all its fond repairs, even those precious pieces which had been victims to his tenderness, and had been mended by Dennison, but he presented her with an answer written with his own hand—the achievement of many a toilsome hour, and interrupted by a thousand occupations, a thousand protracting incidents. Zoraida received it with joy, and gave to it a residence nearest to her palpitating heart. The sacred piece of shawl, another treasured memorial, was next produced, and delivered to

to her whose bosom it had once warmed and guarded—on that faithful shrine it now again was placed, and tears of extacy fell fast upon it. Children of nature! their wonder, and their bliss, were alike unspeakable. But who that saw them would have wished for, or wanted words to explain that their eloquent and common mother had never given life or love to any of her offspring more true to her emotions?

When utterance was restored, they conversed in their own native tongue, and their discourse ran thus: “Dearest Zoraida lives for her Floresco.”—“And Floresco for Zoraida,” answered the enraptured maid; then taking each other by the hand, they ran as if inspired by one idea, to the place where their patrons were grouped, and prostrating themselves before the bishop and the monk, crossed their hands on their bosoms, kissed the ground near which their benefactors stood, and shewed every sign of gratitude.

The bishop and his friends were extremely moved at this meeting of the lovers, and we trust that our readers, in good will to poor Floresco,

resco, will not deem the time lost which they have bestowed on him and his Zoraida.— Even Henry and Caroline received from it an increase of that happiness which still warmed the centre of their hearts from the no less unexpected recovery of one another—a happiness which nothing but such an event could possibly have augmented.

Father Arthur, who for reasons formerly stated, believed the partner of his beloved domestic's heart was no more—felt even a paternal joy, as at the return of a daughter to his arms. He expressed this to his mitred friend, of whom, before he left the palace, he obtained permission to number Zoraida amongst his children. “Be it so,” answered the bishop,—“I confide her to your care: were she, indeed, my daughter, I should not hesitate to place her under such protection—aware as I am that her virtue now, and her reward hereafter, will suffer nothing by investing him at the same time with full powers to dispose of her as he thinks proper. In this too I shall fulfill part of my dear brother's dying request, in granting an asylum to the orphan,

orphan Zoraida; for thus shall I provide for her a father, and a husband. But," continued the bishop, "another part of my duty to her, and to my brother, still remains. Had it pleased heaven to allow time for a more regular distribution of his fortunes, this object of his regard would have had her share: his benevolence would have completed what his pity began. Look then to me for the arrangement of her worldly good, and you, my venerable Arthur, shall be instructed as to my designs on this head, in which the late happy incident has made no sort of alteration."

While this treaty of loving kindness was negotiating betwixt the bishop and the monk, on their return into the house, Henry and Caroline, Johanna and Charles, were made spectators of a scene not less interesting. Partington and the apothecary had informed the associates of Zoraida of her happy rencontre, and its probable consequence, and unwilling that her companions should be no way the better, or the merrier on the occasion, Partington, in the first instance, set them

them all dancing upon the green; he himself opening the rustic gambols. They had received general orders to present nosegays to the bishop's guests on their leaving the garden, and had been gathering the choicest flowers of the season for their master's present company. These the merry-hearted squire distributed with some judgment, giving, for instance, laurels to Henry, and myrtle to Caroline—and, running with Floresco and Zoraida to another part of the garden, demanded the aid of True George to stick that still exulting and ardent couple in the midst of a groupe of sun-flowers: at length not making them comprehend the spirit of his amicable abuse, which, however, he was too happy to restrain, he finished his frolic by gliding money into every palm while he was shaking hands, and then with the delighted apothecary, whose heart always reflected the joy of others, returned into the palace: where, indeed, the rest of the party had gone some time before. John Fitzorton alone remained. He had placed himself, not in sullen solitude to avoid the sight or the sound of the

happy, but where both his eye and ear might be gladdened: yet great and manifold revolutions had passed his mind: he was sometimes forced upon the thought of these, even in the gayest moments of the social joy, or soft endearment of those he loved: and not to cast even a passing cloud on these, he would step aside without seeming to part company, shade himself awhile from the too intense observation of others, and if a sigh or a tear from reflection forced their way, it heaved unheard, and fell unseen, and generally in the next moment he joined his friends, and all was well. He had selected on this occasion his own bouquet, as he saw others gathering—and following an innocent thought, drawn from times long past, but fresh in his recollection, he made up as nearly as the flowers would allow such an assemblage as had been presented to Olivia on the anniversary of her birth. He paused a few minutes to place them as they then were arranged, and as again he slowly moved on he pressed them on his bosom—but as he reached the palace door at which Henry and Caroline were standing

ing with joined hands, he held the flowers in a position so as to prevent any notice of their arrangement as he passed, and then disposed of them to his satisfaction—for they were that night strewed on his pillow.

Yet none of the company had received more heart-felt delight from the meeting of the Indian lovers than John Fitzorton. The evening was passed at the palace with the highest social enjoyment: when the guests were parted, Zoraida was closetted with the bishop, from whom she received permission to accompany the protector of her faithful admirer; and the next morning he delivered her, with his own hand, to her new guardian—having previously explained all his generous designs. He then embraced the whole party, and bade them farewell.

CHAPTER LXIII.

WE feel ourselves called upon, however, at this crisis, to take a summary view of the conduct of Caroline Stuart in the late

transactions at the convent. The votary of eternal retreat had returned to society: she had returned almost from the altar of immortal love, to the altar of human passion; and it was CAROLINE STUART who had done this. Her justification must be sanctioned by every awful power; and it behoves us to take care that, by our inadvertence, we do not leave her exposed to the censure either of having lightly fought, or lightly left, her sacred asylum.—She quitted not human society in disgust, nor with a design to bury herself in the gloomy caverns of inaccessible solitude; forgetful, or affecting to forget, that the world still held objects deserving her love. The paths she had deserted had innumerable flowers, mixed with countless thorns: all the former she had endeavoured to twine into wreaths for her dearest friends; but, lest one of the latter should find its way into their bosoms, she gathered them all in her own—all that, alas, she could remove—and fled with them, where they might no more be heard,—no more be seen; yet, even in the bosom of solitude, stern and eternal, and with many of the sharpest

sharpest of these thorns in her own heart, she taught the cloister to bloom. During her noviciate, her regularity, her gentleness, her wisdom, her talents, had softened the unnecessary rigours of a monastick institution.—

Her harp, her lute, her voice, had been the solace of the sorrowful, and had elevated the joy of the happy. The nuns, the sisters, the superiors resorted to her for fortitude, for comfort, for occupation; and though the sacred hymn succeeded to the song, the harmony of Caroline lost nothing by the ascension of her notes from earth to heaven. In fine, she had communicated joy to all around her: a purer piety, a firmer faith, a meeker resignation reflected from her example; she had made content a resident of the convent, and in bidding farewell to her cloister, she had obeyed the same voice which summoned her to enter it,—the voice of faith, of virtue, and of God!

There now remained nothing to be adjusted at Coutance, but the parting visit of father Arthur to the convents. Caroline seemed to wish she might be permitted to accompany him

him to the Visitation, but in this, she suffered herself to be over-ruled by the tender and transported Henry. The monk, therefore, blended her kindest wishes to the abbess, and to the nuns, with his own, and brought back in return the most cordial felicitations to their favourite Caroline, and her whole party. On the evening of the same day, being informed that a vessel, with good accommodations, might be hired for England, the happy groupe took their leave of Normandy; and without meeting any thing to interrupt their too-often thwarted enterprizes, they regained the coast of Albion, and proceeded to their family-mansions, where the rest of their friends had fondly been expecting them.

Thus, after all their trials, and, we trust, as irreproachable conduct under them as mortals, in this mixed and imperfect state, can hope to attain, were Henry Fitzorton and Caroline Stuart brought together. Yet, several of the events that led to their union were so disastrous, and one in particular, the death of Olivia, so sincerely regretted, even by the parties to whom it gave the freedom of choice,

choice, that nothing but such a succession of great and unexpected blessings could have produced the felicity which was, at length, established, as well in the persons of Caroline and Henry, as in the mutual friends and relatives of both. Time, however, who has been justly represented by a great writer as having a wallet at his back, in which he puts scraps for oblivion, by degrees softened away the memory of past images of distress, leaving only impressions which the mind either contemplates with a melancholy pleasure, or a moral advantage.

The suspended ideas of happiness to some, and of resignation to others, of the families and friends of the abbey and of the castle, at length returned. The remaining enemies of both houses had all been properly disposed of. The treachery of the elder Otley was severely punished, as we have seen, by a tremendous death, and by the hands of those who corrupted him. His corrupters, Valentine Miles, Nicholas Dabble, the younger Otley, with several of their accomplices, male and female, were, in pursuance of their sentence, duly

executed. The reader may remember that John Fitzorton, to appease the disappointed multitude, predicted that the next gathering together of the same culprits would probably be at the gallows. The prophecy was at last fulfilled to very general satisfaction. Of the turnpike-man and his wife the joy was complete; and, indeed, several of the banditti found a certain consolation derived from their mutual hate, even when they were on the scaffold, to perceive their destiny the same. The ingenious Mr. Skuttle, the landlord of the Hand-in-hand, and several of his associates were, for the first time of their lives, devoted to the service of their country. Justice Barhim flourished a short time longer, and was, at length, assassinated by some of those very rogues of whom he was so tenacious; but the indignant and ferocious lady Tempest, rather from rage than shame, effected her own destruction. On the morning of execution, she was found dead in her cell. Resulting from these terrible, but just punishments of vice, the property and happiness of virtue were more effectually secured.

In

In the houses, offices, and hiding places, above and under ground, in various parts of the vast metropolis, appertaining to one or other of the delinquents, the indefatigable prosecutor, his judicial brother, and his learned friend, discovered divers false and extorted securities and instruments, which, though they had passed and repassed through several polluted channels, reverted at length to the first principal, and came back purified, to their proper source. Mr. Thomas, one of her ladyship's first loves, in process of time, amused himself by an evening ride upon the road, and in an attempt to pillage and murder a fellow-traveller, was himself shot through the head. But to Jeputha, by whose means the first discovery of the banditti was made to Partington and his friends, who, as we have observed, was of manners less abandoned, and who had been forced into her criminal employments, and deserted them in terror, his majesty's pardon was extended.

Partington, who had for some time suspended his abusive habits, in the serious and

solemn sympathies of his heart, resumed himself, and again became rude of speech to those he best loved, and well-bred to such as he despised. Of the former, Mrs. Herbert had become one of his most marked objects: her alacrity in carrying the broadsword and loaded gun to the coach, and her other heroic achievements for the gypsey expedition, made the first forcible impression, for he averred that he did not at all doubt the fair caitiff would cut his old head from his shoulders, if he had the honour to be worthy thereof; and since that, the history of her attentions to the young Johanna, and what farther he had observed of her conduct during the sickness of Mrs. Fitzorton, confirmed her conquest; and as she was no less taken with the squire—whose mind she could read, even through the disguise of his humours and singularities,—it was agreed, that on condition the younger varlets consented to make a general marrying day, the middle-aged Amelia, and old Basil Partington should form the first couple. In due time this actually did take place, with a proviso,

proviso, only, on the part of John, which will presently be stated.

True George was at length rewarded with the hand of his lovely Jane, and although the latter, even to the term of a long and respectable life, shewed a disposition to pensive pleasures, which seemed to spring rather from impression of early misfortune, than from constitutional gravity, it no way interrupted her being uniformly an endearing wife, and, in the general, a happy woman: both she and her husband, however, resolved, on principles of real affection, to remain with Henry and Caroline; neither could any persuasion prevail with George to assume the title, although he accepted the office and labours of steward, while the good old Dennison was alive: and it was with no better success that an attempt was made to elevate the latter to a more absolute independency: "As a steward he had lived, as a steward, God willing, he would die."

Partington perceiving a longer delay was likely to happen than he now thought necessary,

fary, determined to settle every thing after his own fashion ; " The caitiffs," exclaimed he, " will at this rate waste their lives in preparing for its establishment." He therefore summoned every body, above and below stairs, into the large hall of the Bury, but scarcely large enough to contain the visitors, and as soon as they were got together—" Good," said he, " and now you shall see that I will pair ye off, ye shilly-shally vagabonds, as easily as I couple my terriers. This blessed day I have determined, that as I mean myself to become a slave to this oldish rascal, none of ye shall be left at liberty to laugh at me." Here he tucked the arm of Mrs. Herbert, under his own, and sallied with her round the room, True George and Jane Atwood, Charles and Johanna, Floresco and Zoraida, Goody Brabson's Sally and William, Jerom and Jonathan, with the apothecary's two fair daughters—also, the son of the gypsey chief, and the pardoned penitent Jeputha, and, notwithstanding a little resistance on the part of the damsel, and a sly look at True George,

Rachael, and the young Sexton—"And if any more insufferables," cried he, "of this our parish of Partington, or any spinsters and bachelors from the vicinity of the castle, or the abbey, who are now our guests, wish to do as we do, this is their opportunity—but there is no time left to think about it, for to tell you the truth, we are waited for in the church, even while we are now speaking."

In real truth, the squire had waggishly preconcerted the whole subject with the rector of his parish, as to both the day and hour, and had caused it to be insinuated, not only about his own parish, but into those above-mentioned, proclaiming, that those who wished to pay due respect to Henry Fitzorton and Caroline Stuart,—of whose rencontre on the continent, and happy union, they were at the same time apprized,—would do well to repair to the Bury, where such as were disposed to marry, and were found to be right and true vagabonds to one another, would find a wedding dinner, and the charge of the special licences defrayed by their sovereign

reign, huge scoundrel, the said Partington. This edict brought together not only all the young, but all such of the old as could endure the labours of the journey; for as it served not only as an information of the union of Henry with the only lady whom they deemed fit to succeed Olivia, but gave them an opportunity to pay their, perhaps, last duty to those they most loved and honoured—most of Olivia's cottagers, and all Caroline's pensioners embraced an occasion so gratifying to their hearts; and with respect to the younger part, the squire had given out that none but such as were disposed to follow his example in regard to marriage, would be deemed sufficiently qualified for the invitation, and it would therefore be expected of all lovers to bring wedding rings in their pockets, and to put an end to all quarrels about sighs, cruelty, &c. by going fairly and openly to church. It is incredible what numbers assembled; so many, indeed, that the feast intended for dinner did not take place until the supper hour.

Partington

Partington led the way to the church, and was amongst the first of those who approached the altar, although he remained the last, preserving throughout the ceremony a reverence of demeanour suited to the occasion, and wholly different from his usual behaviour. On their return from the altar, they were introduced to Henry and Caroline, who received and returned the most heartfelt homage, and although at the particular request of Caroline, much of that gleeful merriment which Partington had plotted, was given up, an evening of more general, or genuine satisfaction and felicity has seldom been seen in this jarring world.

The pensioners and cottagers were continued on the list of Henry and Caroline; but as it was intended by that amiable pair, as well as Charles and Johanna, to reside for some time abroad, and as the colonel had signified his intention to return to the field, the care of all these objects of bounty devolved upon the good old Dennison, who returned to the abbey; and True George
and

and Jane Atwood, during the absence of the family, were the guardians of the castle: little Fitz also, was to have a soft cushion in both these eventful mansions. Father Arthur with Floresco, and Zoraida, whom the good man had united, took possession of the chapel-house, with a reserve of rooms for them in both the castle and abbey, as fancy might direct. And while these points were settling, Partington protested "that he was so much in the habit of living with his old caitiffs, that if his beloved scoundrel of a bride," affectionately caressing her, "was of his way of thinking, she would e'en join the vagabond party, and leave the old Bury to that grey-headed caitiff, Le Maitre, with the use of the woods and hedges to Blondel Gapper."

This proposition being agreed to, arrangements were made accordingly, and Henry Fitzorton with his Caroline, little John and Carry, Charles and his Johanna, Partington and his Amelia, embarked for the continent, with intent to pass the residue of the summer

at

at Paris, the winter in the southern parts of France, and the whole of the following year in Italy.

Meanwhile, resigning with manly grace to dispensations, the wisdom and benevolence of which he presumed not to question, John settled most of his worldly possessions in the manner he had all along intended, on his Johanna, and on the children of Olivia, disposing of the rest so as to testify his remembrance of the worthy in whatever station of life. He once more girded on his sword, from the mingled motives that had already so often urged him to the field. A war with Spain, when some of our islands were threatened with invasion, afforded the opportunity; and a braver or more experienced officer could not have been entrusted with the wealth or glory of his country: victorious alike in the senate and the camp. He was promoted to the rank of General, in the direct line of ascent; for none other would John Fitzorton have accepted.

No less active, nor of less service to his country, the respectable James had yearly continued

continued to illustrate the important advantages derived both to the individual and to the community, by preserving the *golden mean*. In one steady tenour of principles, of integrity, and of perseverance, he still maintained the peace and order of his own mind, and of society. Happy from disposition and from events, he had effected this without having suffered any peculiar misfortune of body or of mind, without being impeded in his progress to fame, fortune, or felicity, by any of those passions which frequently extinguish the desire, and sometimes annihilate the principle, that leads us to be of use either to ourselves or others. He neither encountered nor created one incident that Henry would have called an adventure, or John looked upon as an object of conflict; and yet he wooed, and yet he won. In that part of the human day, which, lying precisely betwixt its blooming morn and fading eve, may truly be called its noon, James Fitzorton, as if destined in all things to be the medium, sought and secured the affections of a very amiable woman,—the daughter of a brother judge,

judge,

judge,—with whom he lived in a state of uninterrupted confidence and tranquillity: a state which we are nevertheless aware, few of our heroic readers will envy, many will think insipid, and upon which, every lover of adventure will look down from the summit of a romantic heart with the most chivalric scorn; yet in spite of all these grand disdains, the lofty character of a safeguard of the public, to whom is confided the property and lives of his fellow-citizens, and the endearing offices of neighbour, friend, and brother, husband, father, and christian, have never been sustained with more unvarying rectitude; and if the rectitude of his illustrious brothers was preserved under temptations more numerous and severe; if a keener feeling of joy, from more acute sensation, sometimes attached to the character of Henry, were not the moments of superior felicity purchased by days and nights of agonizing sorrow?—and did it not call for a philosophy and a life of bosom-contention, rigorous as that of John, to keep reason on her throne? Yet so variously are

we

we formed, that whoever holds his principles uncorrupt, will, probably, like *all* these brothers, have a more equal share of happiness, however unequally dealt out, and certainly be all entitled to the veneration and love of their fellow creatures.

At length, Henry and Caroline, with their attendant friends, after having passed four years, two more than they intended, from home, arrived at Fitzorton castle, where the brothers, John and James, with the bride of the latter, were assembled to receive them, and where they intended to pass the summer. The tender sense of times past remained; yet, as the General now felt disposed to pass the rest of his days in the bosom of retirement, and as there was no longer a wall of separation between the abbey and the castle, Henry and Caroline resided at the former, and the General and Olivia's children at the latter. The lieutenant still intended to resume his long-neglected profession, but, as his Johanna felt herself more at home under the protection of her guardian and friends during her husband's absence,

absence, she agreed to pass part of her time at the abbey, and part at the castle.

The return of Henry and Caroline was celebrated with universal joy; and that share of merriment which was repressed at the Bury, on the general wedding day, now burst forth; the abbey had resumed its former dignity; it was restored to magnificence, and purified by virtue; the feet which had receded ran towards it; the eye that had surveyed it with abhorrence as the carousal of vice, or with alarm, as the haunt of obscene spectres, now again gazed upon it as a place redeemed;—as a sanctuary consecrated anew. Father Arthur, his Indian pair, Dennison, and all but little Fitz, who had breathed his last in a good old age, were found even happier and healthier than they had been left. Old Gaffer and Gammer Atwood were alive, and were on a visit to their daughter, and her happy husband, when Henry came home.—The turnpike-man, honest Blondel, and all of whom the reader of this history can wish to hear pleasant tidings, were in health, and dis-

distributed some at the castle, some at the abbey, some at the manor-house, and the rest at the Fitzorton arms. The jubilee continued several days,—and a great evening, in which all were to assemble previous to separation, was appointed. This, also, was to be conducted by Partington, who declared he was happier than he had ever been in his life. The ancient hall of the abbey was the place of meeting—and although Henry, Caroline, Charles, and Johanna, appeared, only because gratitude demanded their presence for a moment, they withdrew to scenes of less noisy joy; they were, indeed, blest in their fondest wishes, but they felt a pious decency that at once chastened, and attempered their satisfaction, while they remained so near the spots where such a variety of awful events had happened to themselves and their connexions: indeed, after the trial of a few months, they meditated an exchange of the abbey or manor-house, with Partington, for the Bury as a general residence, and only came down in future once a year. The General's principal arrangements were as follow:—to indulging
himself

himself in the society of Johanna, and the education of Henry's son and daughter, the first of whom was given up to his affectionate care, while young Caroline, who presented to him an image of her ever-remembered mother, was consigned to his Johanna. They were both trained to, and confirmed by, the church of England; while the children of Henry and Caroline, should any be the result of their union, were to be cultured in the tenets of their lovely mother, and which the father had thought proper to adopt. These divisions of faith in families are, indeed, always, more or less, to be regretted: but when they proceed from principles, not from passions; from steady faith, not from capricious change, and produce a life pure and holy, differing only in the modes of that faith, who shall presume to boast of exclusive rectitude?

The day after the general rejoicings, the happy guests departed for their several places of abode in the very content of their souls. Mr. and Mrs. Partington, for the present, returned to the Bury; Gaffer and Gammer
Atwood

Atwood to their untroubled cottage; Jerom and Jonathan, with their brides, to farms on the squire's estate: who continued to appropriate all the Atwoods except Jane, and she,—so strange are the revolutions of life,—became, at length, a resident with Henry and Caroline,—a no less singular event,—at Guise abbey. The lieutenant and Johanna passed a month with the General, who desired to settle some matters for their future good—and True George had so much to engage him for some time at both houses, that he was alternately an inmate of one and the other.

For a short time, therefore, Henry and Caroline, Jane and Dennison, were left to themselves; and happy as they were in each other, and in the love and friendship of all who surrounded them—they did not feel it inconsistent with that happiness to pass much of the day that succeeded their grand festival,—the first of their tranquillity,—not with the living but the dead. The church of Fitz-orton, and the chapel-house of the abbey, had a sacred claim on the affections of all: but when Henry left his companions for
a while

a while in the latter, and entered the former alone, he was at once pleased and moved to see John already bending over the urn of Olivia. The brothers did homage at the tomb of virtue, and were soon joined by the votaries from the chapel: and as they rose from their devotions it was to embrace each other—"My Caroline," said Henry, as they were returning home, "wherefore should we again quit these scenes?—have not these pensive sweets every part of our felicity? we are here, methinks, under the immediate ministry, and protection of kindred cherubim! Let us believe that we are in their charge, and they our guardians." "Ah! be the rest of our lives past under their heavenly guidance," said Caroline!—"Blessed, blessed thought," cried Jane. "Do, dear your honours, let us live and die here," exclaimed Dennison, "even where our friends were made angels."

The idea of departed friends changed into guardian spirits, was innocently adopted; the very air and earth were consecrated; from that moment new sources of happiness opened.

Thus the castle, and the abbey became holy ground; nor did they ever leave it more.

CHAPTER LXIV.

THOSE who have fairly perused this history, will, we trust, have progressively traced its design; yet, it may not be amiss to add, in this closing chapter, a recapitulation of its moral. In point of interest with the heart, and effect upon the conduct of the reader, it has been our endeavour to render conspicuous, and impressive, several of the most important objects in literature, in morality, and in domestic life; with examples and warnings appropriate to each.

In one of the personages, the character of a protestant clergyman, and father of a family, of an honourable mind, shaded by human error, and somewhat warped by religious tenacity, has been contrasted with the character and conduct of a man, who is exhibited in the perpetration, consciousness, perseverance, punishment, and repentance, of
progressive

progressive crimes. And as the life and death of the former of these persons give the example of a good man, in the several moral divisions of a divine, friend, neighbour, citizen, parent, and husband, through every period of a wise and active life, even till he quits the world, with the above exception; so does the behaviour of the other, hold out the warning of a vicious being, placed in no less prosperous circumstances, even till he is overwhelmed by a sense of his own enormity; bringing the death-bed of the wicked close under the eye, in contrast to the death-bed of the righteous.

In a third character, has been portrayed a venerable supporter of virtue, in a catholic clergyman, in all the trying instances of a difficult station, to act as a corrective on that intolerant of sentiment, which influenced the opinions of the protestant divine.

A fourth endeavour has been to display, in the domestic history of three young men, brothers, the two great extremes of philosophic energy, and poetic softness of character, with the safety of the middle man

between both, shewing, however, in the conduct of the two former, the possibility of preserving all the virtues of the latter, even when the practice of those virtues are exposed by habit, temper, and pursuit, to more arduous trials.

The power of filial piety has also been given, in the delineation of a mind that preserved its modest dignity, amidst the hardest ordeals, to which a child can ever be called upon, in her relative situation, to pass.

The sixth portrait is that of a candid, and perfectly unsuspecting character, in all the relations of social and domestic life.

The seventh discovers the good produced to an unfortunate woman from some merciful treatment, received from the fortunate of her own sex: for the want of which many a violated form, but unfulfilled mind, languishes in the shades of obscurity, or crowds our streets with irreclaimable victims.

These are interspersed with various examples, and warnings—of faithful domestics in youth, and age—of their contrast in some treacherous

treacherous servants—of pettifoggers in the law—of honourable men in that profession—of patient meekness, unaffected candour, conjugal faith, and maternal affection, through a life of trials: and its appropriate warning is given in a violent disposition, coupling strong powers of mind, with beauty of person and loose principles,* scorning patience and resisting conscience.

A four-

* For a specific detail of the several offences committed by this person, and her accomplices; for the discovery of a dreadful variety of evils, which have never before been explained to the public; and for their moral and legal REMEDIES, we refer the reader to the truly valuable, almost incredible, yet, alas! we are assured, accurate calculations of an able, and active magistrate, in his "*TREATISE on the Police of the Metropolis.*" Lamentable, indeed, is the catalogue of human depravity he has exhibited; but, as the great motive which induced him to enter on such a laborious and painful estimate, was to point out the advantages which would result from a well-regulated and energetic police, conducted with purity, activity, vigilance, and discretion: we conceived that by employing a few of the most prominent facts, applicable to our purpose, from the soul-affrighting list, in a work of this nature, we might give the alarm to that part of the community which suffer most

A fourteenth warning arises from shewing the danger of hazarding the happiness of a child in the momentous article of marriage, on any consideration, where the heart sanctions not the choice of the parent, even

most from one branch of the atrocities enumerated—the corruptions of servants and dependents—against whose arts masters and mistresses cannot be too well armed; and they are less likely to derive useful information of this kind from a systematic treatise, which they apprehend may pass the bound of their proper knowledge, than from books more immediately appropriate to their entertainment, and in which truths on every subject of awful import should, as it were, take them by surprize, and be so mixed with events as to interest while they warm. And it was further believed, that this mode would excite in the mind of every reader of the foregoing pages, an eager, though startled curiosity to peruse the whole of Mr. COLQUHOUN's admirable plan for the prevention of crimes, founded on a detail of the means by which they are conducted to their horrible ends: a plan from which we most ardently join in the hope of the magistrate, that the public in general, and the legislature in particular, will, by giving effect to his well-meant endeavours, most amply reward the exertions he has used in the course of a very intricate and arduous investigation, in which his only object has been the good of his country.

though

though the hand is presented to beauty, elegance, and virtue : since nothing can be more certain, than that more mischief may result from one unhappy marriage, than from an army of men intent on destruction.

Such are some of the great aims proposed to be accomplished by this work as a whole ; from a due contemplation of which, with the parts, must be collected its energy and colour, its ornament and utility. From the intention, we can with confidence claim some praise, for it has been sincere ;—from the execution we can derive nothing but hope. The labour has not been light, nor yet unattended by consolation ; but if *half a long life* could bring the great moral and domestic truths to the point desired, we should exult in the means by which the ends were attained.

F I N I S.

ERRATA.

- Page 9, line 8, penult, for "place" read "plan."
 39 - - 7, for "dispatches" read "dispatch."
 85 - - 9, for "fainting" read "panting."
 91 - - 4, for "where" read "when."
 92 - - 3, for "them" read "him."
 94 - - 9, for "shaving off" read "paring off."
 114 - - 4, for "pillows" read "pillars."
 145 - - 11, for "said he" read "said she."
 167 - - 2, insert "With" before John.
 Ibid - - 3, penult, for "life" read "lips."
 202 - - 3, penult, for "the abbey" read "the castle."
 217 - - 13, for "dear" read "deep."
 230 - - 4, penult, *del.* "and."
 351 - - after line 2, read the remainder of the sentence thus:
 "abbey, with True George, the ready auxiliary of
 every good, it was resolved, *nam. con.* to call in the
 two last mentioned personages as assistants."
 352 - - 6, for "Olivia's the library" read "Olivia's library."
 497 - - 6, for "I ought to" read "I ought not to."
 518 - - 5, for "Scuttle" read "Shifter."

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A POEM.

REVISED AND CORRECTED

BY MR. PRATT.

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